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# LECTURES

ON

# FAMILIES OF SPEECH.

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# FAMILIES OF SPEECH:

## FOUR LECTURES

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THE ROYAL INSTITUTION OF GREAT BRITAIN

IN MARCH 1869

BY THE

REV. FREDERIC W. FARRAR, M.A., F.R.S.

LATE FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE;
HON. FELLOW OF KING'S COLLEGE, LONDON;
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HON. CHAPLAIN TO THE QUEEN.

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TO

PROFESSOR MAX MÜLLER, M.A.

MEMBER OF THE INSTITUTE OF FRANCE

&c. &c.

WHO HAS DONE MORE THAN ANY LIVING SCHOLAR TO

RENDER THE STUDY OF COMPARATIVE PHILOLOGY

AT ONCE POPULAR AND PROFOUND,

I Dedicate these Lectures.

# PREFACE.

THESE LECTURES were delivered, by request of the Committee, before the Royal Institution, during last February and March. They were not originally intended for publication; but they are now published at the request of many among those who heard them. Since their delivery I have subjected them to a revision as careful as was possible to me, with the very limited leisure at my command.

In writing them I have of course been largely indebted to the labours of the most eminent modern Philologians, and especially to the works of Bopp, Grimm, Steinthal, Schleicher, Renan, Pictet, Chavée, Baudry, Bréal, Donaldson, Max Müller, and many others. My obligations to these distinguished

scholars will be found indicated in the notes to the following pages. If in any instance I have omitted a reference where one was due, it will only be a reference to works which I have elsewhere repeatedly quoted.

If this little book is found useful and interesting as an introduction to larger and more important authorities, my object in publishing it will be amply fulfilled.

The Park, Harrow:
*November* 24, 1869.

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# FAMILIES OF SPEECH

## LECTURE I.

It may be a humiliating, but it is an unquestionable fact, that the growth and development of the human intelligence are extraordinarily slow. If we may trust to the evidence which has been so abundantly amassed for the last twenty years by various cognate sciences, and especially by the new science of Prehistoric Archæology, man must be supposed to have wandered for many centuries over the surface of the earth in a condition which seems at first sight but little elevated above that of the beasts which perish, —in a condition, at any rate, as thoroughly degraded as that of the squalid Fuegian, or the hideous Mincopie. Navigators have told us about savages who were ignorant of the use of fire, and who looked upon the boiling water of a kettle as an animal which bit. Savages still exist, who, separated by thousands of years from the very epoch in which

they live, have never yet discovered so much as a coracle wherewith to cross their own rivers, or even (it is said) the possibility and advantage of milking their own cows. As far as we can go back in history, or tradition, or by inferences drawn from undoubted relics of a period when man disputed the possession of his cave-habitation with the hyæna or the bear, it is by such savages that we find the earth to have been overspread. Wherever the foot of civilised man has penetrated,—on every continent which he has explored, and wellnigh in every island which the keels of his ships have touched,—he has found the lands of which he at once proclaimed himself the lord and master, in the immemorial possession of these dark-skinned nations, which though they differed from each other in their moral nature as widely as the sensibility of the delicate and voluptuous Tahitian differs from the dull apathy of the savage and brutal Mundrucus, yet agreed in the utter non-development of their condition, and in their apparent incapacity to exist side by side with the advanced culture of a fairer race. These inferior and autochthonous tribes have no history; their very existence—the significance of which for the history of humanity cannot be fully understood,—is now, alas, only a precarious present, with no record in the past and the certain fading away into extinction in the future.

How long this prehistoric night of the human

intelligence may have lasted we cannot say, and there are of course large regions of the globe where it has not yet been dispelled. But next in order to these unprogressive savages, in the earliest dawn of any civilising influences, though still far back in the remotest traditions of the most ancient humanity, appear* the great semi-civilised races of Eastern Asia and Northern Africa,—the Egyptians, over the records of whose many dynasties of kings 'the iniquity of oblivion' has indeed 'blindly scattered her poppy,' but who, in pyramid and obelisk and painted sepulchre, have left behind them the imperishable material records of their cruel, crude, and one-sided development; and the Chinese, who with their ideographic writing, their monosyllabic language, their materialistic culture, and the sudden suspension of progress observable in the promising commencements of their art and science, continue to exist like the reanimated fossils of some extinct organism. It might well have been imagined some thousands of years ago, that in the latter at any rate of these two races, there was hope for the continuous progress of mankind; but for long centuries, some inexplicable paralysis seems to have stricken the vitality of every other mental faculty, and left them the enjoyment of memory alone. A

* This word 'appear' is perhaps the best which we can use, because no vaguer word could be found to represent an historic fact of which the true nature never has been, and perhaps never will be, satisfactorily explained.

once gifted and living intelligence has been, since history has left any record of its existence, bound hand and foot in the mummy-cerements of an obstinate, unmeaning, and indomitable conservatism.

It is not till the third great æon of human records—far back indeed, but still so immediately connected with the present by a demonstrable continuity, as to be almost visible to us by the combined use of the telescope of history and the microscope of linguistic archæology—that we begin to recognise in their neighbouring cradles in the vast table-lands of Central Asia, the two great races to whose existence is due all, or nearly all, which makes man most distinctively man;—the stately, thoughtful Semitic race, to which belong within but a few days' journey such volcanic centres of religious enthusiasm as Mecca, Sinai, and Jerusalem, and to which it was given to express for ever the most unfathomable depths of religious emotion, and the loftiest heights of holy aspiration:—and the noble, ever-progressive Aryan race, the progenitor of Persian and Pelasgian, and Celt and Teuton, the discoverer of well-nigh everything which is great and beneficent in the arts of war and peace, the race from whose bosom came Charlemagne and Alfred, Dante and Shakspeare, M. Angelo and Raphael, Newton and Descartes,—the parent in the modern world of the metaphysical subtlety of Germany, and the vivid intelligence of France, and the imperial energy of

England, the parent in the ancient world of the lofty spiritualism of India, 'of the glory that was Greece, and the grandeur that was Rome.'* Since, then, these two latter races, the Semitic and the Aryan, in which alone the spirit of inquiry seems to have been developed, are, so to speak, the youngest members of the great human-family, it is hardly to be wondered that, probably, thousands of years had passed over hundreds of unprogressive generations before it ever occurred to men to notice that there was anything wonderful in the faculty by which they were most distinctively men. Our savage progenitors, like our savage contemporaries, wondered at nothing. Their life, if I may be allowed the expression, resolved itself into a boundless anxiety about their dinner—not, I mean, as to its quality, which is perhaps an anxiety of civilisation, but as to its quantity, and above all as to the probability of procuring it. There are two kinds of ignorance, the one stolid and sterile, the daughter of a merely animal vacuity; the latter quick and intelligent, the twin-sister of admiration, and the parent of that beautiful and reverent wonder from which springs the whole progeny of knowledge.† But

* See, for an admirable résumé of these facts, Renan, *Hist. des Langues sémitiques*, pp. 490–2.

† 'In wonder all philosophy begins, in wonder it ends, and admiration fills up the interspace: but the first wonder is the offspring of Ignorance; the second is the parent of Adoration: the first is the birth-throe of knowledge; the last is its euthanasy and apotheosis.' —*Coleridge.*

when the stolid ignorance of the savage was succeeded by the wondering and open-eyed ignorance of the Aryan and Semite,—when in the two noblest branches of the human race, intelligence of any kind was once stimulated into activity, it is certainly amazing, if anything could be amazing when we have once realised how strangely slow has been the development of mankind, that the spirit of inquiring wonder was so little directed to any single phenomenon of human speech, or that, when directed, it should have been for long ages so erroneous in its methods, and so narrow in its conditions. Man was in possession of a faculty, which was not only the simplest, the most unexpected, and the most essential of all his faculties, but also the most spontaneous, and the most easy of consideration. He possessed in the organs of utterance a musical instrument which was at once a harp, an organ, and a flute,—a musical instrument of astonishing compass, of infinite inflexibility, of most thrilling and mysterious power, on which Nature herself gave him, without any conscious effort of his own, the mastery of a finished performer. But what relation had this strong yet delicate organ of sound to all the great many-coloured world of phenomena without him, and all the shadow world of impressions within him? To his ears Nature brought infinite variations of melody; she whispered to him in the rustling of the forest leaves; she sang to him in the

rising and falling of the wind; she shouted aloud in the voices of the mountain and the sea; and it might be conceivable that *so far*, he might translate into living and articulate utterance these multitudinous and varied intonations. But what imaginable connection had this vast chorus of sounds with the dumb or inaudible sensations which thronged to him through the gateway of four other senses, in the sweetness of odours, in the multitude of tastes, in the warmth of the sunlight, or even in the 'soft eye-music' of the colour and the light? It might have seemed in the very nature of things an impossibility to translate the manifestation of one sense into any form of analogy which should be comprehensible to another, or to render the expression of such distant analogies in any way significant to the strange totality of the individual mind. And when this apparent impossibility was complicated by what might have seemed the yet *greater* impossibility of finding an utterance for the invisible, voiceless, *inward* emotions of the intellectual and spiritual being,—of *co-ordinating* the expression of sensations from the *outward*, with impressions from the *inward* microcosm, and of rendering them alike intelligible to the *separate* world which comes before us in the personality of each individual man, —here was a problem before which even a divine Thoth or an eloquent Hermes might have yielded in despair. Yet here was a problem which the simplest

savage infant had, somehow or other, been taught unconsciously to solve; so that by the fluid air which he articulates into human utterance man has found it easy to fill the universe with living words which are at once the pictures of its material phenomena and the 'shadows of his own soul;' and on a sonorous wave, more evanescent than the tremulous laughter which ripples the summer sea, he can impress records of his outward history and of his inmost being more indestructible than Babylonian palace or Egyptian pyramid. And short as is the reach of that 'pulse of articulated air,' and rapidly as its undulations disappear, he can yet grave the symbols of its vibrations on the rock, or paint them on the vellum, or print them in the book, so that they can live from generation to generation, and reach from pole to pole.

That by long researches into evidence derived from every country and every age, this almost incredible problem has been at least approximately solved, it has been my object to maintain in a little work *On the Origin of Language*, and subsequently to defend against the strictures of more than one eminent opponent. I have there endeavoured to prove that the *Idea of Speech*—the δύναμις or potential faculty of it as distinguished from the ἐνέργεια or actual exercise—lay implicitly in two undeniable natural instincts, and one psychological law. The

conception that it was possible to render intelligible to the ear sensations derived from the *outer* world arose from the instinct which leads to the articulate reproduction of natural sounds. The conception that it was possible to express in sound the inward emotions—the invisible life of the individual soul—arose from the felt significance of those instinctive and involuntary cries which are the germs of interjections. The conception that it was possible to develope these elementary methods of expressing and recalling the phenomena alike of the ego and of the non-ego, and to combine the utterances of both into intelligible speech, was due to the Law of Association. An imitation of the sound made by any animal was readily accepted as a symbol of the animal whose image the sound recalled, and also as a symbol of the ideal conceptions which the animal naturally represented. The free and necessary use of such symbols would rapidly lead, as it does among the deaf and dumb, to the perception of certain inexplicable analogies between the impressions produced by external objects on *different* senses. Thus there would arise that metaphorical mode of expressing thought which so completely permeates the whole of language as to render it one vast volume of compressed allegories and implied resemblances. Each metaphor, as it became current, would be accepted in its secondary meaning, and language

would soon become, what now it is, a conventional and artificial instrument for the utterance and intercommunion of human thought.*

Into the grounds of this demonstration,—a demonstration which, as far as I can see, elucidates every single step of the process, and which is deduced from and supported by the actual facts of languages in every stage of crudity or development,—I do not purpose to enter in these Lectures; both because the arguments on which it rests are before the world, and have never, so far as I am aware, been proved to be erroneous, and also because I have already published all that I immediately desire to say upon the subject. Suffice it to call attention to the repeated admission that by such a process language *could* have been developed, and that no other theory deserving of the name has ever been offered in its place. It is rather my purpose in these Lectures summarily to sketch the broadest and most general results of linguistic inquiry, and to dwell less on disputed theories than on well-established facts.

But as I wish first of all to pass in review the gradual *growth* of Comparative Philology, I may mention that although among the rude primeval races to which I have alluded, language excited little or no speculation, and even Grimm, with his immense research, only knew of one legend bearing

* 'Itaque si antiquum sermonem nostro comparemus, *pæne quicquid loquimur figura est.*'—Quinct. *Instt. Orat.* ix. 3.

upon it, yet, curiously enough, that legend shows a rude attempt to express the true theory. It is the Esthonian legend* that 'the Aged One,' as they call the Deity,† placed on the fire a kettle of boiling water, from the hissing and bubbling of which the various nations learned their languages. This kettle is no other than the mist-wreathed crest of the Kesselberg with its storms and thunders; so that this aboriginal people instinctively conjectured that nature alone had taught men how to modulate vague sounds into intelligible utterances, just as they supposed that Song had been learned by man first, and by all voiceful creatures, from listening to Wäinämöinen as he sat and played amid the roaring woods of the Domberg, while the fish only remained dumb because, when they stuck up their heads, their ears still remained under water, and they could only imitate the motions of the god's mouth.‡ A similar legend is that of the Australians who explained the gift of speech by saying

* See *Chapters on Language*, p. 118. I trust that I may be pardoned for trenching once or twice in this Lecture on ground which I have already traversed.

† Cf. 'the Ancient of Days.'—Dan. vii. 9.

‡ In the *Kalewala*, however, the national epic of the Finns, there is nothing special in the conduct of the fish while Wäinämöinen sings.—*Rune.* xli. l. 117.

'Damals gab es keine Wesen,
Keine Thiere in dem Wasser,
Die zum hören nicht gekommen,
Sich nicht freuten voll Erstaunen.'

(Schliefner's translation, p. 241.)

that people had eaten an old woman, named Wururi, who used to go about at night quenching fires with a damp stick; for Wururi is no other than the damp nightwind, and the languages learnt from devouring her are the guttural reproduction of natural sounds.*

2. Turning from savage to semi-civilised races, we are not aware that among any of them, even among the intelligent Chinese, any speculations respecting the nature of language have arisen. The only thing which was likely to have turned Chinese curiosity in this direction was the influence which Buddhism acquired over vast portions of their race, which led to the translation into Chinese of various Buddhist books, all abounding in Sanskrit names, which also occurred with great frequency in the narratives of the Chinese pilgrims. The deciphering of these names as they appear transliterated in Chinese books is one of the most brilliant achievements of philological science, and the manner in which it has been effected by M. Stanislas Julien† is one of the many proofs how intense is the devotion which that science inspires in its pioneers.‡ Before M. Julien devoted his attention

* I adopt Steinthal's explanation of this legend.

† See *Méthode pour déchiffrer et transcrire les noms sanscrits qui se rencontrent dans les livres chinois.* 1861.

‡ Take for instance such a life as that of Anquetil du Perron. At the age of twenty he accidentally found some Zend MSS., and was fired with the determination to visit India, and bring back the works of Zoroaster. In order to do so he gave up good prospects of ecclesiastical preferment, and, being too poor to carry out his designs

to the subject, the problems had remained unsolved because the sinologues had known no Sanskrit, and the Indianists had known no Chinese. M. Julien had become a sinologue by accident. One day he had strolled into the room of a young friend, M. Fresnel, who was preparing a passage of the philosopher Meng-tsen for a lesson with M. Abel de Rémusat. M. Fresnel explained the signs, and went through the lesson word for word. M. Julien asked, more as a joke than anything else, if he might take M. Fresnel's place at the lecture. He did so, and construed the passage through with perfect correctness. From that time he became a pupil of M. de Rémusat, and before the year was over had studied with such ardour as to be capable of publishing a French translation of the Chinese philosopher. But even this did not exhaust his patience. He bent his whole genius to solve the problem of deciphering these names which had hitherto, in Chinese translations, been expressed by phonetic signs of which no one possessed the key; they were called *Fan* words, and it was not even known that Fan was but an abbrevia-

in any other way, enlisted as a common soldier, and left Paris on November 7, 1754, with a knapsack on his back, behind a bad drum, an old sergeant, and half-a-dozen recruits. Neither tigers, forests, wild elephants, treacherous guides, deceitful teachers, moral temptations, or jungle fevers diverted him from a design in which he sought neither glory nor riches, but only knowledge and truth. Such men are the glory of a nascent science. 'Il faut lire,' says M. Michelet, 'au premier volume de son livre, *l'étrange Iliade* de tout ce qu'il endura, affronta et surmonta.'

tion of Fan-lan-mo, which is the necessary shape assumed in Chinese by the word Brahma.* The first who proved them to be Sanskrit words at all, was M. de Chézy.† For the sole purpose then of deciphering these words, M. Julien first made himself a master of Sanskrit, and then by the aid of two lists of Hindoo words written in phonetic characters, and translated into Chinese, after dissecting some 4,000 Sanskrit words which represented 12,000 syllables, and very *many* thousands of ideographic signs, he succeeded after fifteen years of minute, laborious, and almost unremitting toil—toil which would seem unspeakably repulsive to anyone who did not realise the self-rewarding ardour and heroic enthusiasm of scientific research—he succeeded in 1861 in demonstrating the law of transcription, and for the first time reading these names in their proper form.

3. The importance of this discovery, and the manner in which it illustrates what is now being done, excuse this momentary digression, although in fact no Chinese, so far as we are aware, ever devoted fifteen idle minutes to the philological inquiries which

* Since in that language the letter *r* does not exist, and they are unable to pronounce two consecutive consonants by one emission of the voice. (Similarly *l* does not exist in Zend and New Zealand, and *r* is substituted for it.)

† He detected the word *Bharyâ*, 'woman,' under the form *Po-li-ya*, and *Dêva* under the form *ti-po*, &c. The Sanskrit *bhavapa*, 'you two are,' becomes in Chinese *po'-po-po*.

occupied the French scholar for fifteen toilful years. But in this complete absence of all curiosity respecting language, the Chinese did not stand alone. The *Hebrews*, to whom we next turn, added as little to Philology as the Chinese. Influenced by the belief—a belief which in reality contravened the distinct theory of their own sacred books—that God had *revealed* a full-grown language to mankind;—understanding with their usual literalness that the creation was the result of a fiat *articulately* spoken by the demiurgic voice—they attached to language a divine and mysterious character, and presupposed a *natural and necessary* connection between words and things. This conception runs through the whole of the Old Testament. By virtue of it we find in Genesis no less than fifty derivations of names, in many of which the name is evidently supposed to have had a mystic and prophetic influence—as when Noah is said to mean comfort, and in his days the earth was comforted; Peleg 'division,' and in his days the earth was divided; Abel 'fleeting,' and he died in youth.* It is to a similar cause that we owe those constant plays on words, very many of which might be selected from the sacred books, and of

* It is well known that many of these etymologies are *philologically* untenable, and are merely meant to have a mystic significance. *Isshah*, 'woman,' for instance, cannot be derived from *Eesh* (Gen. ii. 23), nor Noah from *Nacham*, 'comfort' (Gen. v. 29), nor Moses from *Mâshah*, 'be saved' (Ex. ii. 10, cf. Gen. xli. 45), nor even Adam from *Adamah*, 'earth' (Gen. ii. 7).—See *Chapters on Language*, p. 268.

which one occurs as early as the second verse of the book of Genesis.* A single instance will perhaps be sufficient to illustrate the Hebrew conception of the sacredness of words. You will remember in St. Matthew (ii. 23), the passage, 'And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, And he shall be called a Nazarene.'† Now no such passage occurs anywhere in the prophets, and it is an ancient interpretation, which is now most commonly received, that the passage is an allusion to a single word in Isaiah, where the promised Messiah is called Nētzer or the Branch. To accept the mere word—the mere physiological character of the sound entirely independent of its meaning—as in itself sufficient to involve a mysterious prophecy, if it served to recall other sounds expressive of totally different conceptions, is entirely accordant with what we know of the Hebrew view of words,‡ and especially of the words of the sacred book, the very letters of which

* 'And the earth was without form and void.' תֹהוּ וָבֹהוּ, *thohoo vahhohoo.*

† Is. xi. 1. In the other Messianic passages referring to Christ under the title of 'the Branch' (Zech. iii. 8; vi. 12; Jer. xxiii. 5; xxxiii. 15), the Hebrew word is not נֵצֶר, but צֶמַח, *tzemach.*

‡ Even Bishop Ellicott seems to adhere to some such view, for he says that 'we are justified in assigning to the word Ναζωραῖος all the meanings legitimately belonging to it by derivation or otherwise. . . . We may therefore trace this prophetic declaration (*a*) principally and primarily in all the passages which refer to the Messiah under the title of the Branch, &c.'—*Life of our Lord*, p. 81 *n.*

they accurately numbered,* and in not a few instances built on a single letter a system of hidden significance. † Even the *anagram* of the name,

* The Masoretes numbered the verses of every book in the Bible, noted the middle verse of each book, the first and last letter of each verse, and even the number of letters which each contained. Thus, there were 5,888 verses in the Pentateuch, and Levit. xiii. 33 was the middle verse, &c. This purely superstitious reverence of the letter is closely analogous to that paid by the Hindoos to the Vedas, from which words must never be quoted without preserving their exact order and context.—Benfey, *Gesch. der Sprachw.* 57. In fact the grammarians at the court of Vicramâditya did for the Vedas the same kind of service that the Masoretes did for the Bible, and the Alexandrian Diasceuastæ for the poems of Homer.

† Besides the obvious sense of the Bible (*sensus innatus*), the Jewish Cabbalists believed in a *sensus illatus*, or inferential meaning, to be deduced by the three processes, *Gematria*, *Notargekon*, and *Temurah*. The first of these developed the symbolism of *letters* according to the number of times they occurred; the second made new words out of the initial or final letters; the third attached mystic significance to the anagram of words. For instance, by what was called *Atbash*, the word *Sheshach* in Jer. xxv. 26, li. 41, was supposed by Jerome to stand for *Babel*, because the letters שׁשׁך occupy the same places, counting from the end of the alphabet, as the letters בבל from the beginning. *Albam* and *Atbach* were minor modifications of the same principle. One instance will show the importance attached to a letter. In Hag. i. 8, speaking of the second Temple, the words occur: 'I will take pleasure in it, *and will be glorified* (וְאֶכָּבֵד);' now in this latter word the letter ה is omitted at the end, and as ה stands for five, the Jews insisted that the second Temple would consequently in *five* respects be inferior to the glory of the first; and so they reckon up *five* things, and five only (the Ark, the Shechinah, the Urim and Thummim, the holy fire, and the spirit of prophecy), which were lacking to it. The same spirit of interpretation lasted far on into Christian times. Thus, since the Greek letter τ stands for 300, Clemens saw a symbol of the Cross ('the mystical Tau,' φασιν οὖν εἶναι τοῦ μὲν κυριακοῦ σημείου τύπον) in the 300 cubits of the Ark; and since the letters τιη stand for 318,

even the meaning of words formed of letters which had the same numerical value, even the words formed of letters which occupied corresponding places at the other end of the alphabet, were thought to contain a memorable meaning. Nor was this all. The utterance of any accidental words might not only prove to be unconsciously prophetic, but might even act with the potency of a spell; the tongue, though guided by apparent chance, might yet aid the workings of destiny, so that mere words, irrespective of the persons by whom, or the circumstances under which they were uttered, could evoke the powers of darkness, and unloose the bands of the earthquake and the hurricane.* And hence, since things once uttered were uttered irrevocably, the Bath Kol, or daughter of a voice—such chance words as Gideon heard in the camp of Midian, or Jonathan at the fort of the Philistines—was accepted as a recognised method by which God sometimes made

they saw in Abraham's 318 servants, the cross and the first two letters of the name of Jesus (*τὸ δὲ ἰῶτα καὶ τὸ ἦτα τοὔνομα σημαίνειν τὸ σωτήριον.*—Clem. Alex. *Strom.* vi. 11, 84). It is remarkable that the mark set upon the foreheads of those who are to be preserved alive (Ezek. ix. 4, 6) is תָּו, a sign of life like the Egyptian *crux ansata*.

* '"'Tis but a word," object—
A gesture—he regards thee as our lord
Who lived there in the pyramid alone,
Looked at us,—dost thou mind?—when being young
We both would unadvisedly recite
Some charm's beginning, from that book of his,
Able to bid the sun throb wide and burst
All into stars.'—Browning, *Epistle of Karshish.*

known his will; it was, in fact, regarded as the fourth grade of special revelation. When the Rabbis Jonathan and Simeon were on the point of visiting their friend the Rabbi Samuel, who lived in Babylon, they thought it ample reason to abstain from the journey, because, as they passed by a school, they heard a boy reading aloud the words, 'And Samuel died;' and when the Rabbis Jonah and Jose were on the point of journeying to the Rabbi Acha, who was sick, they felt sure that he would not die, because they heard one woman ask another, 'Is the lamp extinguished?' to which she replied, 'Let not the lamp of Israel be put out.'*

* Otho, *Lex. Rabbin.* s.v. Bath Kol. Buxtorf, *Lex. Talm.* s.v. בת. The view was by no means peculiarly Jewish.—See Herod. ix. 90 (where the good omen of the name Hegesistratos decided Leotychides to assist the Samians, and led to the battle of Mycale); Liv. v. 50 (where the accidental '*hic manebimus optime*' of a centurion settled the dispute about removing the seat of government to Veii). Every one will remember the Pythia's *ὦ παῖ, ἀνικατός εἶ*, used in reply to Alexander's importunity. Two interesting anecdotes of a similar character are told by Cicero, *De Div.* i. 46. L. Paullus while at war with King Perses (or Persa), seeing his little girl sad, asked her the reason, and she replied, 'Mi pater, Persa periit. Tum ille arctius puellam complexus, *Accipio*, inquit, *mea filia, omen;* erat autem mortuus catellus eo nomine.' Again, when Cecilia went to seek an omen about her niece's marriage, no omen came till the girl, tired of standing, asked her aunt to give her room to sit down. '*Vero, mea puella, tibi concedo meas sedes,*' said Cecilia, 'quod omen res consecuta est. Ipsa enim brevi mortua est; virgo autem nupsit, cui Cæcilia nupta fuerat.' Again, when Crassus was starting on his fatal Parthian expedition, the army noticed with dread that a man was crying Caunian figs for sale, and that *Caunias* sounded fatally like *cave ne eas.*—*De Div.* ii. 40. Many modern instances might be

4. Nothing resembling Philology could of course be expected from a nation which took this solely superstitious view of words; and yet it was a similar view which enlisted the sympathy of many eminent Greek philosophers. For nearly 1,000 years of thought, the main question which divided all who entered upon grammatical speculation was the formula, which to us seems almost meaningless—Did words originate by Nature or by Convention? were their form and significance determined by inward necessity or by arbitrary caprice? Have words any abstract fitness, any inherent force, or are they mere accidental labels, conveniently attached to the things we wish to mention? Those who argued that words were *natural* were called Analogists; those who held that they were due to convention were called Anomalists.* Neither disputants could be said to have contributed much to the subject of *Language*, although they furnished valuable contributions to Logic and Psychology. Even the *Cratylus* of Plato, rich as it is in metaphysical subtlety, has a merely historic value for the philological student; and the etymologies in which it abounds are, like those of the Greeks in general,

mentioned, especially in the lives of religious men like Dr. Doddridge, Mr. Simeon, &c. Napoleon, on hearing of the loss of the djerm *l'Italie*, declared to his officers, 'My presentiments never deceive me; Italy is lost.'

* The whole subject is exhaustively treated by Lersch, *Sprachphilosophie der Alten.*

nearly always untenable, sometimes utterly absurd.* This was indeed inevitable among a people which, however acute, scorned to become acquainted with any language but their own,† and which, classing all other nations under the one contemptuous epithet of 'barbarians,'‡ failed even to discover that the language of their great enemies the Persians belonged to the same family of speech as that which they spoke themselves. In point of fact, the science of Language, like the natural sciences, depends solely on minute

* As where he derives θεὸς from θέειν, *to run*, because the first deities were the sun, moon, and planets.—*Crat.* 397 c.

† It is a remarkable fact that even so great a man as Apollonius Dyskolos, devoting his life to grammatical studies, does not take the slightest notice either of Latin, or of any other foreign language. See the admirable monograph of M. Egger, *Apoll. Dyscole*, p. 50.

‡ Πᾶς μὴ Ἕλλην βάρβαρος is the proverb quoted by Servius (*ad Virg. Æn.* ii. 504). In Rom. i. 14, Luther translates βάρβαροι by *Ungriechen*. The word is an onomatopœia for unintelligible sounds. Not that this ignorant contempt for all other nations was at all confined to the Greeks. It has been found in nearly all nations. Indeed the very word 'barbarian' was possibly borrowed by the Greeks from the Egyptians (*Hdt.* ii. 158, cf. 'Berber'). The Indian Aryans called the aborigines *Mleühas* (indistinct speakers); the Hebrews called all Gentiles לֹעֵג or 'stammerers;' and in such names as *Zamzummim* they intended to satirise the jargon of hideous reduplications which the aboriginal language of Palestine presented to their ears; similarly *Deutsch* means 'clear of speech,' but *Wälsch* (Vlah, Wallachian, &c.) means 'confused.' On the other hand, Slavs (=the speakers) called the Germans *Niemec*, or 'dumb' (cf. ἄγλωσσος). A large number of similar national designations has been collected by Pott, *Die Zigeuner*, ii. 339; *Ungl. der menschl. Rassen*, 70. 'Nous trouvons que dans les langues les plus anciennes, les mots qui servent à désigner les peuples étrangers se tirent de deux sources: ou de verbes qui signifient *bégayer*, *balbutier*, ou de mots qui signifient *muet*.'—Renan, *Orig. du Lang.* p. 178.

and laborious observation, and therefore it belongs to this century alone, because in this alone have languages been etymologically scrutinised and grammatically compared.

Although, however, *comparative* philology was unknown to the ancient world, yet *philology* in a more special sense—i.e. grammatical study of the phenomena of single languages—was carried by them to a considerable extent. The sophist Protagoras distinguished the moods of verbs, and woke the laughter of Aristophanes by calling attention to the anomalies of verbal gender.* Plato—and it seems strange that centuries should have elapsed before so very simple an exercise of analysis—seems to have been the first to distinguish accurately between nouns and verbs.† Aristotle added the conjunction and the article. The Stoics ‡ adopted the

* Cf. Aristoph. *Nub.* 660–682. Had the Γραμματικὴ τραγῳδία of the comedian Kallias come down to us, we should probably have found many witticisms of the same character. But grammar and logic were deeply indebted to the much-abused Sophists, whose discoveries in these sciences have survived by centuries the comic sneers of their deriders.

† Plat. *Crat.* § 88; Arist. *Poet.* 20. 'It will be proved to thy face that thou hast men about thee that usually talk of a *noun* and a *verb*, and such abominable words as no Christian ear can endure to hear.—'Jack Cade,' *Henry VI.* 2nd Part, iv. 7.

‡ To this school more than to any other we are indebted for the foundations of scientific grammar. Chrysippus especially wrote voluminously on the subject. Most of what is really valuable in the writings of the old grammarians has now been incorporated into grammar; but it is one of the merits of Harris (in his *Hermes*, 1751) to have called attention to their writings.

division of the eight parts of speech. The Alexandrian grammarians, devoting to the text of Homer a study almost as earnest and devout as the Jews to the Scriptures and the Brahmins to the Vedas, amassed, though for the most part in a very crude and uninteresting manner, immense catalogues of grammatical and dialectic facts. At length Rome began to snatch at the sceptre which was falling from the enfeebled hand of her sister Greece. The intercourse between the two people increased. Grammar became necessary to teach the young Roman a language which formed the main part of his intellectual training. The supply soon followed the demand. The philosopher Crates (an eminent grammarian of the Anomalist school, and at one time chief librarian of Pergamus), while staying at Rome (B.C. 157), on an embassy from King Attalus II., broke his leg by stumbling over a grating, and spent the period of his recovery in giving lectures (*ἀκροάσεις*) on grammar to the most distinguished men at Rome.* They took up and

* Max Müller, *Lectures*, i. 109. For some time the grammatical teachers at Rome were Greeks. The first who seem to have compared Latin and Greek were Tyrannion the younger, in the time of Augustus, who treated Latin as a dialect of Greek (*περὶ τῆς Ῥωμαϊκῆς διαλέκτου ὅτι ἐστὶν ἐκ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς*); and Philoxenus in the reign of Tiberius, on whose works there is an excellent little pamphlet by Kleist (*De Philoxeni Grammatici stud. etymologicis*, 1865). In their general conclusion (which may be said to have lasted down to very recent times) Hypsicrates had anticipated them. At least, so we must infer from the scanty notices of him in Aul.

continued the study for many years with immense enthusiasm; and even the great Cæsar himself, at the very moment he was conquering the Gauls, delighted to spend the winter evenings in his tent in writing a treatise on grammatical analogy. This treatise he dedicated to Cicero, and in it he achieved the honour, which perhaps no other emperor has ever enjoyed, of having succeeded in adding a new word to language*—for he invented the term 'ablative case.' The study of Varro and Quinctilian is still fruitful; and the line of Latin grammarians culminated in Donatus and Priscian, who laid the foundations of grammar as it was taught, not only throughout the Middle Ages,† but even (alas!) down to the present day.

But although the pursuit of classical philology,

Gell. *Noct. Att.* xvi. 13, and Varro, *De Ling. Lat.* iv. 21). Erroneous as their conclusions were, these comparisons of Greek and Latin are the earliest efforts of comparative philology.—See Benfey, *Gesch. der Sprachw.* p. 148; Lersch, *Sprachphil. der Alten*, iii. 167.

* Sueton. *De Illustr. Gramm.* Capito is said to have remarked to the Emperor Tiberius, 'Tu enim Cæsar civitatem dare potes hominibus, verbis non potes.' Claudius tried in vain to introduce his new letter *antisigma* (Priscian, i., *De Literarum Numero*, &c.); and 'Augustus himself, in possession of that power which rules the world, acknowledged that he could not make a new Latin word.' (Locke, *Ess. on Hum. Und.* vol. iii. p. 2, 8).

† Hence a *donet* was, as everyone knows, the synonym for a grammar, and so it came to mean the elements of any subject: as in *Piers Ploughman's Vision*, 'þenne I drou3 me among þis drapers *My Donet to leorne.*' The title of one of Bishop Pecocke's books was *The Donat into Christian Religion*, and Cotgrave quotes a French proverb, 'Les diables estoient encore à leur *Donat.*' See Dr. Smith's *Dict. of Mythol.* s. v. Donatus.

continued as it was for nearly two millenniums, laid solid and durable foundations for the future science of language, and although the comparative philologist cannot but still feel the profoundest respect for the stupendous learning and critical acumen of such classical giants as Heinsius, Salmasius, Gronovius, Muretus, Casaubon, and Bentley, yet all their labours were devoted, as M. Baudry has well observed,* to the '*architecture* rather than to the *chemistry* of language'—that is, to the *usage*, and not to the *analysis* of words.† The laws of etymo-

* *De la science du Langage et de son état actuel*, p. 3.

† Yet many *general* philosophical facts and inferences of the utmost importance may be found scattered throughout the long-obsolete labours of eminent scholars during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Of the many books briefly noticed by Benfey (*Gesch. der Sprachw.* p. 205–312), the following were among the most important:—Jul. Cæsar Scaliger, *De causis linguæ Latinæ*, 1540; Sanctius, *Minerva, seu de causis linguæ Latinæ*, 1587; Bibliander, *De communi ratione omnium literarum et linguarum*, 1548; Gessner, *Mithridates. De differentiis linguarum*, 1558; G. J. Voss, *Aristarchus, sive de arte grammatica*, 1635; Ménage, *Dict. étymol. de la Langue française*, 1650; Job Ludolf, *Gramm. et Lexicon Æthiop.* 1661; Hadr. Reland, *Dissertationes Miscellaneæ*, 1706. Of more recent works of the eighteenth century, not otherwise alluded to in the text, we may mention: De Brosses, *Traité de la formation mécanique des Langues*, 1765; Court de Gébelin, *Hist. naturelle de la Parole*, 1774; Lord Monboddo, *Origin and Progress of Language*, 1773; Harris, *Hermes, or a philosoph. enquiry concerning Language*, 1751; Horne Tooke, *Ἐπεα πτερόεντα, or The Diversions of Purley*, 1786; *Linguarum totius orbis Vocabularia comparativa; Augustissimæ* (Cath. II.) *curâ collecta*, 1787. The mere names of later works on this subject would fill a volume. At the head of the list might well have been placed the *De Vulgari Eloquio* of Dante, which rendered an immense service to the Italian language. Dante was acquainted with no fewer than fourteen dialects.

logy continued to be utterly unknown, and the only theories on language in general were to the last degree erroneous, because they were influenced by a false theological bias which absorbed them in the attempt to prove that all languages were deduced from the Hebrew. A single specimen may serve to show how hopelessly and grotesquely absurd was the method of enquiry. Guichard in his *Harmonie Étymologique* tried to show that it was easy to derive Greek from Hebrew if you read all Greek words backwards, and that this style of etymology was quite reasonable, since Hebrew was read from right to left! *

The idea of a purely philosophic grammar—a grammar which, from the comparison of various languages, should discover and illustrate the true principles of a *perfect* language — had presented itself to the great mind of Bacon. Rejecting the etymological mysticism of the *Cratylus*, he says that the noblest form of grammar would be one

* 'Quant à la dérivation des mots par addition, subtraction, transposition et inversion des lettres, il est certain que cela se peut et doit ainsi faire, si on veut trouver les étymologies. *Ce qui n'est point difficile à croire, si nous considérons que les Hébreux escrivent de la droicte à la senestre, et les Grecs et autres de la senestre à la droicte.*'—*Harm. étymol.* Préf. Almost any page of this extraordinary book will show the chaotic state of etymology at the period when it was written (1610). Thus (p. 19), he derives from the Hebrew word אוּבָל, *ubhal*, not only the Latin *palus*, and the Greek πύλη and βηλός, but adds, 'peut estre aussi que de אוּבָל, *valva* a esté dérivé, par transposition des radicales, *porta*.'

which could only be written by some one who was thoroughly learned in many tongues, both polished and unpolished, and who could treat of the excellences and deficiencies of each, framing from them all some form of speech, which, like the Venus of Apelles, should be a combination of all beauties. Such a grammar would, he says, deduce the moral and intellectual peculiarities of nations from the characteristics of their languages. Cicero, from the absence of any Greek equivalent for the Latin *ineptus*, infers that among the Greeks such frivolity was so universal as to escape recognition. Similarly from the power of framing compounds in Greek and the diminution of such power in Latin it might at once be inferred that the Romans were great in *action* and the Greeks in *art;* while from the almost total absence of all compounds in Hebrew, together with the paucity and isolation of their words, we might at once perceive that they were Nazarites among the nations. Again, he appeals to the synthetic character of ancient languages, compared with the analysis which distinguishes their modern representatives, as a proof of the greater acuteness and stability of the ancient intellect.* 'Innumera sunt ejusmodi,' he continues, 'quæ justum volumen complere possint. Non abs re

* We need hardly add that the inference is erroneous. See *Origin of Language*, p. 176.

igitur fuerit grammaticam philosophantem a simplici et literaria distinguere, et desideratam ponere.'*

Nor is this all. Proceeding to assign to the province of grammar all inquiries into the sound, quantity, and accent of words, except so far as the sound is a purely physiological matter, he says that by 'sound' he here means the laws of grammatical euphony, which laws are of two kinds—viz., 1. Those that are *common*, since all languages to a certain extent avoid the hiatus of vowels or the concurrence of too many consonants; and, 2. Those which are *special*. 'Greek, for instance, abounds in diphthongs; Latin has far fewer; Spanish dislikes the *tenues* (p, k, t), and changes them into *medials* (b, g, d); Gothic, and the languages derived from it, delight in aspirates. Many similar instances might be mentioned, but perhaps even these are more than enough.' Of Bacon, more than of any other writer, it may be said that 'in the very dust of his writings there is gold;' and in this passing remark we see that he had already observed with interest both the *mechanism* of speech and those regular permutations of letters in different linguistic families, from which, by an immense induction, Jacob Grimm established the famous law which is

* *De Augmentis Scientiarum*, vi. 1. *Advancement of Learning*, bk. ii.: 'The duty of it (Grammar) is of two natures, the one popular . . . . the other philosophical, examining the power and nature of words as they are the footsteps and prints of reason.'

one of the most memorable discoveries of modern philology.

Such anticipations of modern enquiry, even by so great an intellect as that of Bacon, are sufficiently remarkable; but the first real prophet of the new science was the immortal Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibnitz, born at Leipzig, July 3, 1646. Theologian, physicist, mathematician, historian, philologian, statesman, metaphysician, *nihil tetigit quod non ornavit.* He was one of those men who, like Roger Bacon, like Abelard, like Francis Bacon, like the Marquis of Worcester, seem to have appeared two centuries before their time, and to have mounted Pisgah-heights from which they could clearly see lands which neither they nor any of their coevals were destined to enter. As for the philology of his age—*lateritiam invenit, marmoream reliquit.* Rejecting the Hebraic* theory which was at that time, and had been for centuries, the great stumbling-block in the path of philology, he was the first to see that linguistic science was as exact as any other, and therefore should only be studied on the same principles and by the same methods as any of the natural sciences. Instead of forming theories, he strove to collect facts. In his *Collectanea Ety-*

* Alluding to the ridiculous etymologies of Goropius Becanus (which originated the word *goropiser*), he yet speaks with approval of his theory, that Hebrew has no signs of being a primitive language, and could not have been the language of Paradise.

*mologica,* in his correspondence with Ludolf, in his 'Essays on the Human Understanding,' and in many other works, he rendered repeated services to the science of language—a science which awoke his most ardent interest. Why, he asked, should we commence with the unknown instead of the known? We ought obviously to begin with the modern languages which are close at hand, in order to compare them together, to note their affinities and differences, and so proceeding to their *immediate* predecessors to show their filiation and origin, and to mount finally, step by step, to the most ancient, the analysis of which may alone conduct us to acceptable conclusions. In following out the method which he had sketched with so much wisdom and prescience, he not only strove to arouse the interest of travellers, scholars, and missionaries, but also, in a celebrated letter written October 26, 1713, he urged Peter the Great to have the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments translated into all the languages of his dominions, 'that every tongue,' as he expressed it, 'might praise the Lord.' Such a plan, he argued, 'would tend to the glory of your Majesty, lord of so many nations, and deeply interested in their amelioration; it would enable us, by a comparison of languages, to discover the origin of the nations which, starting from Scythia, a portion of your Majesty's dominions, have invaded the Western countries; and, above all, it would further

the extension of the Christian religion among the nations which speak those languages.' Peter the Great had neither the leisure nor the literary insight to secure the accomplishment of this proposal, but seventy-two years afterwards Catherine II. warmly embraced the plan, and when she could find no leisure to carry it out in person, entrusted its completion to Professor Pallas, and watched its progress with the deepest interest. She had a number of test words in Latin, French, German, and Russian distributed among scholars, ambassadors, travellers, &c., to be rendered into as many languages as possible. The result was the publication of a comparative glossary of no fewer than 272 languages of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America; and, little as they knew how to use the collection after it had been amassed, Catherine, from the study of it, had the acuteness to observe how various were the symbols for the same thing in different languages—how 'heaven' was in one language 'vault,' in another, 'cloud,' in another, 'breadth'; and how God was sometimes expressed by goodness or loftiness, sometimes by sun or fire. The transcription into Russian letters, the unfortunate choice of the words, and the total neglect of grammatical enquiry, greatly diminished the value of the undertaking. Nevertheless, it produced some valuable results, and the task of the imperial votaress was followed by others. In 1800 appeared the *Catalogo de las*

*lenguas* of the Spanish Jesuit missionary Lorenzo Herras, and in 1806 the *Mithridates* of Adelung, completed after his death (for he began this astonishing work at the age of 74) by Vater, and finally by the younger Adelung in 1817, the year after the publication of the *Conjugations-System* by Bopp. Partly, perhaps, from the extreme unsuitability of the Lord's Prayer* for versions of this kind, these voluminous and laborious works led to no practical discoveries of any value. Adelung himself called them '*Curiositäten-Cabinetter*,' and felt that he must 'leave much to a better future.' His labours served no other purpose than to keep alive some interest in the subject, and to give currency to a few ingenious generalisations. They were, as Prof. Max Müller† observes, the separate molecules floating about without cohesion, awaiting for their regular crystallisation the flash of some electric spark.

Two years after, the thrill came, for the year 1808‡ may be fixed on as the year of the discovery of Sanskrit. Now what do we mean by the discovery of Sanskrit? We mean that up to this time

* Schildberger in his travels had given two specimens of the Lord's Prayer, in Armenian and Turkish (1427), but the first of the *Vaterunser-Sammlungen* was a specimen of the Lord's Prayer in five languages in *Linguarum duodecim introductio*, by Gul. Portellus. 1538.

† *Lectures*, i. 154 (2nd. ed.).

‡ Dr. Donaldson fixes on this year in his valuable paper on Philology in the *Encycl. Britannica*.

there had appeared to be an absolute distinction of race and sympathy between the inhabitants of Hindostan and the whole world of Western civilisation, when suddenly attention was drawn to a certain dead language in which were enshrined the sacred Vedas of the Brahmins, and which, though it had been dead for more than three thousand years, was obviously the direct source of all the main modern dialects of the Hindoos; and it was found that this language presented the closest and most remarkable affinities, not only to the Persian, which was conterminous with it, but even to all the main languages of Europe, from the volcanic plains of Iceland and the bleak fiords of Norway down to the sunny bays of Italy and Greece. At first this appeared so unaccountable, so absolutely incredible, so subversive of all that had hitherto been believed, that the fact was either stoutly denied, or it was asserted that any coincidences between Greek for instance and Sanskrit were simply due to a few accidental words which had got currency after the conquests of Alexander. But after the year 1808 it was impossible for any candid mind to be contented with so inadequate an explanation of the known facts. In that memorable year—which was also the year of Porson's death—Colebrooke published his edition of the *Amara-kosha*, Wilkins his *Sanskrit Grammar*, Schlegel his *Essay on the Language and Wisdom of the Indians*, and Prichard his work on

*The Varieties of the Human Race.* But these works were but the full dawn of which the earliest beams had shuddered through the darkness some years before. The very first European who seems to have known the existence of Sanskrit was an Italian, Filippo Sassetti, who became acquainted with it during a residence at Goa between the years 1583–1588. 'Sono scritte le loro scienze tutte,' he says in his Letters (which were first published in Florence in 1855), 'in una lingua che chiamano SANSCRUTA, che vuol dire bene articulata.' He speaks of the antiquity, beauty, and euphony of the language, of its fifty-three elementary sounds, of his great desire for a deeper acquaintance with it, and adds, in a most remarkable passage—one of those pregnant remarks in which is involved the germ of sciences yet unborn—'e ha la lingua d' oggi molte cose communi con quella, nella quale sono molti de' nostri nomi e particularmente de' numeri, il 6, 7, 8, 9,* Dio, serpe, et altri assai.' † Nearly a

* Isolated observations of this kind about different Aryan languages occur not unfrequently: e.g. Salmasius noticed the resemblance between Greek, Persian, and German numerals in his *De Hellenistica Commentarius*, 1643.

† I quote these very interesting words from Benfey, *Gesch. der Sprachwissenschaft*, p. 222. This valuable and elaborate work only appeared a month after the delivery of these lectures, but I have occasionally made use of it in preparing them for publication. I should add, however, that in not a few instances I had previously consulted the same authorities as Benfey and made the same extracts from them.

century afterwards, in 1664, Heinrich Noth had learnt Sanskrit in India in order to dispute with the Brahmins. In 1740 a Jesuit missionary had called attention to its strikingly synthetic character. In 1776, N. B. Halhed—who in some respects may be regarded as the Copernicus of comparative philology—in the preface to his Bengali Grammar, was the first European scholar to express his astonishment to find—if I may quote his own words—'the similitude of Sanskrit words with those of Persian and Arabic, and even of Latin and Greek; and these not in technical and metaphorical terms, which the mutuation of refined arts and improved manners might have occasionally introduced, but in the main groundwork of the language, in monosyllables, in the names of numbers, and the appellations of such things as would be first discriminated on the immediate dawn of civilisation.'* The torch of knowledge was now well alight, and it was snatched eagerly by many hands.† If Halhed was the

* The words 'and Arabic' in this quotation rather spoil it, since they confuse a Semitic language with Aryan languages which have no resemblance to it either in grammar or vocabulary.

† Lord Monboddo, however, in his quaint style complains of the immense preference accorded to the natural sciences. 'The learned of this age,' he says, 'though they be so much occupied with the facts of natural history, plants, minerals, flies, and reptiles, that they have no time to apply to the history and philosophy of their own species: yet I should think they would have some curiosity about an art so exceedingly useful, by which the whole business of human life is carried on; . . . and without which they could not have been instructed in the knowledge they value so much: *for how else could*

Copernicus of philology, the learned, industrious, and amiable Sir W. Jones may well be called its Galileo. The germs of comparative philology may be found in the following remarkable passage of his paper in the *Asiatic Researches* (i. 422). 'The Sanskrit language, whatever may be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either, *yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could have been produced by accident;* so strong that no philologer could examine all the three *without believing them to have sprung from some common source which perhaps no longer exists.* There is a similar reason, though not quite so forcible, for supposing that both the Gothic and the Celtic, though blended with a different idiom, had the same origin with the Sanskrit. The old Persian may be added to the same family.'* The progress of the study

*they profit by the most accurate account of insects which Réaumur has given in six volumes in quarto, containing the history of flies with two wings and flies with four wings, with a supplement to the history of flies with two wings*, but which he very modestly entitles, not a history, but only *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des Insectes?*'—Monboddo, iii. p. v.

* Both Halhed and Sir William Jones had probably (unknown to themselves) been anticipated in their discovery by many whose names are unrecorded. We have already seen the striking remarks of Filippo Sassetti in 1583. In 1767 Father Cœurdoux, a French Jesuit in Pondicherry, had written a letter to the Abbé Barthélemy calling attention to the question: 'D'où vient que dans la langue

was now wonderfully rapid, and tended entirely to substantiate these remarkable and prescient conclusions. In 1784 Sir William Jones founded the Asiatic Society. In 1785 a young merchant, Mr. Wilkins, translated the Bhagavadgîtâ, and in 1787 the Hitopadeśa.* In 1789 the publication of the Śakuntalâ by Sir William Jones showed what pearls might be fetched from this unknown sea of literature. From 1805, Colebrooke—perhaps the greatest and most profound of our Sanskrit scholars—began a long series of valuable publications, and, among many other eminent services to science, gave to Europe the first full and accurate information on the subject of the Vedas. In 1802, Alexander Hamilton, a young English officer on his way home from India, was seized in Paris, among other *détenus*, by one of the most infamous and arbitrary acts which stain the name of Napoleon. Happily

samscroutane il se trouve un grand nombre de mots qui lui sont communs avec le latin et le grec, et surtout avec le latin?' The latter words were added to preclude the answer that such similarities were due to Greek influences subsequent to the conquests of Alexander. He gives lists of pronouns, numerals, interrogatives, &c., and notices that the dual, the syllabic augment, and *a* privative are found in Sanskrit no less than in Greek, from which facts he infers the original affinity of Greeks, Latins, and Hindoos. Unfortunately Anquetil du Perron, to whom Barthélemy handed the letter, seems to have attached no importance to it, and it was not published till after his death in 1808. See Bopp, *Gram. Comp.* par M. Bréal, I. xvii.

* He was the first to print in Sanskrit, and he actually constructed and cast his own types.

in this instance, however, this most inexcusable barbarism in modern warfare was overruled into a blessing to European civilisation. For during his long and unwilling detention, Hamilton taught Sanskrit to M. de Chézy, who became the first professor of the language in Europe, and to Frederic Schlegel, whose glowing and eloquent Essay *On the Language and Wisdom of the Indians*, by its poetry and enthusiasm, effectually aroused the attention of every cultivated mind. Later on, M. de Chézy gave lessons to the lamented Eugène Burnouf, and to Franz Bopp,* whose *Conjugations-System*, published in 1816, and his Comparative Grammar in 1833,† founded a new epoch in literature, and in the direction and development of human thought. Three years after, in 1819, Grimm, the Kepler of etymology, published the first part of that magnificent Teutonic Grammar, in which he

* So M. Chézy says, but it seems to be doubtful, since Bopp in the preface to his *Nala* (Lond. 1819, p. 3) says, that he taught himself Sanskrit without assistance. Benfey, *ubi sup.* 372.

† The original title of Bopp's Comparative Grammar in 1833 was '*Vergleichende Grammatik des Sanskrit, Zend, Griechischen, Lateinischen, Lithauischen, Gothischen und Deutschen.*' In the edition of 1856–1861 '*Armenischen*' was added after *Zend*, and *Altslavischen* after *Lithauischen*. No better choice of Aryan languages, for the purposes of Comparative Philology, could have been made, since they included the oldest or the most important and best preserved languages of the main Aryan branches, viz.: Indian, Iranian, Hellenic, Italic, Slavonic, and Teutonic. Lithuanian, though not representing a large division, preserves the original forms so uncorrupt, that it is fully as important for linguistic purposes as languages which are, chronologically, more ancient.

stated, proved, and developed the laws which determine the interchanges of sound in various Aryan languages, and so founded a new branch of etymology, which up to his time was in danger of constant death from a 'plethora of probabilities.' In the same year Professor Wilson published the first Sanskrit and English Lexicon, and since then the work has been pursued with ardour by an army of toilers. The fine genius of Schlegel, the large inductive spirit of Bopp, the splendid historical knowledge and patriotism of the brothers Grimm, the deep thought and philosophic insight of Wilhelm von Humboldt, the almost incredible industry and inexhaustible knowledge of Pott, have built the foundations of the new science on the broadest and securest bases. A younger generation of workers, not unworthy of such immortal predecessors, has continued the task. Philology has won the willing services of scholars like Lassen, Benfey, and Weber, and Kuhn and Aufrecht, and Goldstücker, and Schleicher, and Steinthal, and Eichhoff, and Bréal, and Renan, and Chavée; and last, but not least, of Professor Max Müller, by whose lectures, so original, so eloquent, and so full of genius, an impulse has been given in England to linguistic pursuits, which will, I hope, ultimately produce workers among us, especially among young students, and among those who are gifted with the inestimable blessings of leisure and the love of toil, such as may save

England from the discredit of failing and lagging behind in the splendid torch-race which she, most undoubtedly, had the honour to begin.*

So then we arrived at a discovery indicated and rendered possible by English energy, deepened and defined by German science and enthusiasm, extended and illustrated by French intelligence and skill. Let us pause at this point to indicate some of the results of this discovery, results of which it is almost impossible to overrate the importance or the interest for those who feel a noble curiosity respecting the past history and future destinies of the human race.

First of all, then, the Hindoos had worked out from an entirely opposite point of view, the linguistic studies which had occupied the Greeks. The Greeks had minutely recorded the functions of words, the Hindoos had laboriously examined their form. The Greeks, says M. Bréal, had studied the philosophy of speech, the Hindoos its chemistry and natural history.† Among the Greeks all sense of the fact that their apparently dead inflections were once living verbal elements was entirely lost; they had not a conception that there was anything but arbi-

* German writers point with pardonable pride to the fact that for nearly fifty years the profound study of Comparative Philology has been almost exclusively confined to their countrymen. Even in other countries Germans are the most prominent supporters of the science, as Max Müller in England, Oppert in France, Budenz in Hungary, Bleek in South Africa, &c. Benfey, *Gesch. der Sprachwissensch.* 15.

† M. Mich. Bréal, *De la forme et de la fonction des Mots.*

trary caprice in the 1,200 little different terminations which were requisite to express the mood and tense changes of their own verb. But the Hindoos had better preserved the history of their language, and therefore they had succeeded in carrying out a most minute analysis of its constituent elements. The name for grammar in Sanskrit (*vyâkarana*) means analysis. An eminent philologist has said that next to the Vedas, the grammars are the most original things in Sanskrit literature. In this instance, superstition, the deadliest enemy of science, has rendered her an unconscious service. This touching fidelity of preservation, this luxury of minute precautions, was all due to a sacred zeal. We should read with silent amazement the names and number of the Sanskrit grammarians, and the extraordinary voluminousness of their works, if we did not know that the labours of them all, from Pânini downwards, were devoted to preserve for the delicate ears of their countrymen the pronunciation of a language, the very name of which means 'the perfect,'* and which was the shrine of utterances which they believed to be directly miraculous.† And it increases our amazement to know that so much was done without an alphabet, which long after it had been adopted from

* 'The word *Sanskrita* or *Samskrita* is made up of the preposition *sam* (=σύν, *con*), 'together,' and the passive participle *krita*, 'made.' . . . The compound means 'carefully constructed,' 'symmetrically formed.'—Monier Williams' *Sanskrit Grammar*, p. 1.

† See Muir, *Sanskr. Texts*, iv. 14.

the East was regarded as an impiety. Even as far back as the Rig-veda we read of Vâch, the goddess of language, and it is not too much to say that the entire laws of phonetics and the permutation of letters—the very bases therefore of all etymology, and of all rational grammar—are due to the discovery of Sanskrit. In these days the merest tiro ought to know, and it is to be hoped that, in spite of the sterility of our grammatical teaching,* he soon will know, facts of the deepest interest and the most beautiful simplicity about Greek and Latin—facts which treble their interest, which lighten up all their difficulties, and change their anomalies into illustrations of curious and valuable laws. For what has the discovery of Sanskrit done for grammar? It has taught us *the essentially important distinction between the material and the formal element of words,*

* It is a discreditable fact, but it most assuredly *is* a fact, that in the days of Bopp and Steinthal and Schleicher, much of our so-called grammatical teaching is even more empty and infructuous than if we had been living in the days of Sanctius. It is to be hoped that the recent changes in the Classical Tripos at Cambridge may gradually produce a race of scholars and teachers not one of whom shall remain contented with the poor attempt—an attempt which so generally fails—to hammer into the heads of unwilling pupils a crude mass of forms and inflections respecting the very nature of which the boys continue to be, from first to last, as ignorant as their teachers. I have seen a good many foreign grammars, and have heard and seen something of grammatical teaching in foreign schools, and I doubt whether any grammars are so bad as most of ours, or any grammatical teaching so narrow and meaningless as that which passes for such in English schools.

i. e., between the root, stem, inflective base, or what the Hindoos called the *aṅga* or body of the word, and those little syllables, mainly the débris of pronouns or of auxiliaries, hitherto deemed an absolute mystery, by means of which we express the mutual relations of ideas, 'which by the elasticity of their meaning lent themselves to every modification of the main conception, and by the fluidity of their form adapted themselves to every species of combination; which are the direct sources of that richness, clearness, and liberty of idiom which characterise Greek and Latin, and which by their plasticity have given to words the appearance of organised bodies, carrying in themselves the principle of their own development.' †

It is true that by a splendid guess, our own countryman Horne Tooke had, in his *Diversions of Purley*,* stated with the utmost distinctness his belief in the fact that the terminations of nouns and verbs in declension and conjugation 'are themselves separate words with distinct meanings.' 'These terminations,' he says, 'are all explicable, and ought all to be explained, or'—he adds, with a contemptuous allusion to the *Hermes*, in which terminations were supposed to have arisen from convention,—'there will be no end of such fantastical writers as this Mr. Harris, who takes fustian for philosophy.' In

* Part II. ch. vi.

† Bréal, Bopp, *Gram. Comp.* II. xxviii.

answer to the question 'Is not the Latin *ibo* an assertion?' he replies, '*Yes indeed is it, and in three letters: but those three letters contain three words: two verbs and a pronoun.*' Bopp himself could not have enunciated the fact more decisively, and there is no doubt that, before the rise of Comparative Philology, Tooke's genius had led him to anticipate one of its most remarkable conclusions; but unfortunately, the arguments which he offered in proof of his position, were for the most part thoroughly erroneous. In asserting that case, gender, number, are no parts of a noun, and mood, tense, person, number, no parts of a verb, but in each instance *separate words expressive of these accompanying circumstances*—words whose separate signification has merely been lost sight of from their constant coalescence with the nouns or verbs—he was enunciating a discovery which should have won him immortal honour; but it seemed even easier to believe with Harris that they were purely artificial, than to believe (for instance) that *ibo* was a compound of *i*, *βούλομαι*, and ego. Hence, long afterwards, Schlegel considered that flexions were spontaneous creations of the intellect, and even Grimm spoke of them as a mysterious element. Horne Tooke was before his age. Everyone can speak of the many groundless hypotheses and demonstrable errors of the *Diversions of Purley*; but few have done justice to the eminent philological ability of its author. It

has remained for a modern German * to admit that, had Horne Tooke been acquainted with Sanskrit he might have taken a foremost position among the greatest of philologians. The discovery of that language *demonstrated* what he had *conjectured*.

Then, secondly, the discovery of Sanskrit brought the intellect of Europe face to face with the intellect of Hindostan. Hitherto the education and culture of Europe had been almost solely Hellenistic, but now the modern world was to receive a new impulse from its contact with the grandeur, profundity, and calm of oriental thought. The rapture of Goethe—the subtlest and most cultivated intellect of Europe—on perusing the Śakuntalâ, will show how little † I exaggerate—

Willst du die Blüthe des frühern, die Früchte des späteren Jahres,
Willst du was reizt und entzückt, willst du was sättigt und nährt,
Willst du den Himmel, die Erde mit einem Namen begreifen,
Nenn' ich Sakontala dir und so ist alles gesagt.

The devotion to classical literature had, at the beginning of this century, been too long continued and too exclusive; it gave to the mind of Europe a development one-sided and therefore injurious. We had learnt to confine the very meaning of the word 'antiquity' to the history of Greece and Rome; but

* Benfey, p. 310.

† Compare the enthusiastic language of M. Michelet on the *Râmâyana:* 'L'année 1863 me restera chère et bénie. C'est la première où j'ai pu lire le grand poëme sacré de l'Inde, le divin *Râmâyana*.'—*Bible de l'Humanité*, p. 3.

the discovery of Sanskrit revealed to us a wholly new chapter in the history of the world's youth: it enabled us to study the infancy of our race in the first gorgeous bloom of its imaginative passions. As Schlegel wisely prophesied, the study of oriental literature, to us so completely novel in structure and ideas, will, as we penetrate more deeply into it, bring back a new idea of the Divinity, and restore that vigour to the intellect, that truth and intensity of feeling to the soul, which invests all art, literature, and science with new and glorious life. Until the discovery of Sanskrit anything resembling a true philosophy of history was a thing impossible. Nor is this all; for the science of Comparative Mythology, which is of incalculable value for any history of the religions of mankind, and which has for the first time enabled us to see the inner significance of the old Greek and Roman theogonies with their vast circle of hitherto unintelligible legends, sprang immediately from the study of the sacred poems which were enshrined in this dead language of Hindostan.*

Thirdly, and for the present lastly, the discovery of Sanskrit was fraught with results which may become unspeakably important to the English race. With all our energy and resourcefulness it must, I

* This most memorable fact had not escaped the keen eye of Sir William Jones, who called attention to the 'striking similitude between the chief objects of worship' in Greece, Italy, and Hindostan.—*Asiat. Research.* i. 224.

think, be confessed that as a colonising nation we have not shown that suppleness of accommodation, that sympathy of tact, which gave such marvellous stability to the conquests of Alexander and the dependencies of Rome. Wherever we have gone—strong, self-confident, defiant—we have too often carried with us our intensest prejudices, and either ignored or trampled on the profoundest and most cherished convictions of the conquered races. And the result has been that, Christians though we are,—and animated as thousands of our sons have been with a sincere desire to elevate and ameliorate the condition of the people we govern,—and chivalrous as have been the isolated acts of beneficence which not unfrequently we have bestowed on them, we have *not* succeeded in securing the loyalty, the affection, even the devotion, which pleasure-loving Greece and iron-handed Rome were often able to gain for themselves in a space of time so much more brief. It was in the very year of the hundredth anniversary of that memorable battle of Plassy which laid the corner-stone of our Indian empire, that the whole splendid edifice was rocked and shaken to its foundations by the horrors and violences of the Indian mutiny. We conquered, indeed, but we conquered by fire and sword; and every burning hamlet, and every devastated field, though it seemed but a just retribution exacted on murderers of women and boys and little children and grey-haired old men,

was yet a fatal proof that we had not understood the character, and still less had we won the affections, of the race whose hatred against us after 100 years of domination blazed no less fiercely than our indignation against them. Oh! if, instead of calling them and treating them as 'niggers;' if, instead of absorbing with such fatal facility the preposterous notion that they were, with few exceptions, an abject nation of cringing liars, to be despised and kicked, our young officers would but have learnt from the first the noble spirit of Sir John and Sir Henry Lawrence, and of Sir Herbert Edwardes, of Outram, the Bayard of India, and of him whose nickname of Clemency Canning will one day prove his most splendid memorial—if our missionaries had but tempered sometimes their righteous fanaticism of hatred against idolatry with a deeper historical knowledge of the religions of the world, the great ideas which they conceal under weird mythologies, and the traditions of hoary antiquity which they enshrine; if they could but have carried with them into their disputes with learned Brahmins, that breadth of noble reverence and tender sympathy which characterised a Heber, a Martyn, and a Cotton: nay, that thorough appreciation for the sacred sensibilities of others which was shown by the great Apostle of the Gentiles, when, in the forefront of his argument with Athenian idolaters,*

* It is true that to an English reader the exordium, 'I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious,' sounds somewhat blunt

he appealed to their altar '*To an unknown God*'; if our scholars had but earlier been enabled to discover, as they have now discovered, that the glorification of Brahmins and the degradation of Sudras, and the infamous institution of suttee, and the iron network of caste, which for so many centuries has cramped the development of India, derive no sanction from the Vedas, and were no part of the ancient religion, but the invention of an arrogant and usurping sacerdotalism, or, at the very best, an erroneous tradition due to the half-knowledge or to the imposture of the native pundits,—then, indeed, a military despotism would long ago have been needless for the government of India; then, indeed, the Hindoos no less than ourselves would have recognised the bond of unity between us because of the common ancestors from whose loins we both alike are sprung, and we no less than they should have seen that in coming to Hindostan with our advanced civilisation, we were returning home with splendid gifts, to visit

and harsh; but the actual words of the Apostle, Ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, κατὰ πάντα ὡς δεισιδαιμονεστέρους ὑμᾶς θεωρῶ ('Athenians! I observe that in all respects you are deeply reverential towards the Gods'), seem, as even Chrysostom observed, to be words rather of compliment than of blame (ὥσπερ ἐγκωμιάζειν αὐτοὺς δοκεῖ οὐδὲν βαρὺ λέγων), being, in fact, almost identical with the remark of Pausanias, *Attic.* 26: Ἀθηναίοις περισσότερόν τι ἢ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἐς τὰ θεῖα ἐστι σπουδῆς. Further, there is distinct proof that during his three years' residence at Ephesus, St. Paul did not rudely and coarsely attack the worship of the Ephesian Artemis (οὔτε βλασφημοῦντας τὴν θεὰν ὑμῶν, Acts xix. 37).

a member of one common family, and that the meeting between us was but the meeting of Esau and Jacob after long years of separation,—who met each other with mutual affection and the kiss of peace, although from the womb it had been prophesied respecting them that '*the elder should serve the younger.*'

# LECTURE II.

'L'Europe, en connaissant mieux ses véritables origines, ne comprendra-t-elle pas enfin ses véritables intérêts?'—A. REVILLE, *Rev. des deux Mondes*, Feb. 1, 1864.

I MENTIONED at the conclusion of my last lecture a few of the great results which had originated in the discovery of Sanskrit. Those results were, i. the foundation of Grammar and Etymology upon a rational basis, and thereby the means of making language an indestructible picture of the mind and genius of past races, even in their earliest and most unconscious workings; ii. the contact with the poetry, philosophy, and religion of the people of Hindostan; and iii. the recognition of that people as one with us in its origin and characteristics. But I have to dwell to-day on a further development of this last advantage,—the central, the most splendid, and the most memorable achievement of linguistic and philological research,—I mean the unity of the great Indo-European or Aryan race;—the proof that all those nations which have been most memorable in the history of the past, and which must be all but universally dominant in the history of the future, sprang from one common cradle, and are closely united by identity of origin and similarity of gifts

We are all of us old enough to remember the burst of ignorant derision and theological contempt with which the majority of unscientific Englishmen greeted the announcement of the Darwinian hypothesis. People pleasantly cracked their little jokes about 'the sublimation of silkworms into men, and infusoria into elephants,' and thought that they had triumphantly refuted the new theory when they had spent their innocent and perfectly harmless witticisms on 'our great grandsire the primeval fungus.' Now, the first announcement of the Aryan unity was received with a large amount of similar incredulity, and many of my hearers must have heard the constant pun about 'the Aryan heresy' which used to amuse my friend Mr. Crawford, the late genial and learned president of the Ethnological Society. But in spite of all this doubt and ridicule, Science, as unconcerned as are the signs of Zodiac to their yearly caricatures in 'Punch's Almanac,' quietly and unconcernedly wins its way. What was at first the bold and brilliant conjecture from comparatively slight evidence of Sir William Jones, has now been proved, by half a century of magnificent and incessant labours, to be an unquestionable fact. Fifty years ago, few would have believed that Dutch, and Russian, and Icelandic, and Greek, and Latin, and Persian, and Mahratti, and French, and English, were all indubitable developments from one and the same original tongue, and that the common

ancestors of the nations who speak them were—in times that may be almost called historical—in times, at any rate, the reality of which can be rigidly tested by the microscope and spectrum analysis of Philology—were living together as an undivided family in the same pastoral tents.* In the present day, no one doubts the fact, except a few intrepid theologians. When we look at the table which is before us, a table which in its remotest branches represents the treasured discoveries of devoted and laborious lives, it is but a concise statement of the astonishing truth, that we Europeans, together with the Persians and Hindoos, however wide may be the apparent and superficial differences between us, are, nevertheless, members of a close and common brotherhood in the great families of nations. First westward and northward, afterwards eastward and southward, the Aryans extended: they forgot the rock whence they were hewn, and the hole of the pit whence they were digged: they became wholly ignorant of their mutual relationship; and when, in their various emigrations, they met each other—like the lion-whelps of a common lair—they met each other no longer as brothers but as foes: yet brothers they were; and now, at least, the science of language has restored to them the knowledge of this unsuspected

* The labours of Rask, Anquetil du Perron, and Eugène Burnouf, conclusively established the Aryan character of Zend and modern Persian; and the labours of Prichard, Zeuss, and Diefenbach, left no doubt whatever as to the Aryan origin of Celtic.

truth. It will be happy for them if,—like brothers who are on the point of fighting, in some old drama, but who, at the last moment, recognise each other by some common token, and, laying down their swords, embrace with repentant tears, –they learn the meaning involved in this providential rediscovery of their original kinsmanship. In former days, a fact like this might have been regarded with indifference; but now there is not a single branch of the Aryan family which is not sufficiently advanced to understand and appreciate its moral significance. In our hands—not merely as *individual* peoples, but, if we be true to our duties, as one complete, immense, and royal generation amid the kingdoms —are placed the mightiest destinies of the future. If we fulfil the work obviously pointed out to us by God, we shall *unite* in our efforts to ameliorate the entire condition of humanity: we shall rival each other only in the race of civilisation and benevolence: we shall, in the prophetic imagery of Scripture, beat our swords into ploughshares, and our spears into pruning-hooks, and WAR SHALL BE NO MORE. Hitherto, too often, the footsteps of the Aryan, as he has pressed forward among the swarthy aborigines of the lands which he has taken in possession, have been footsteps dyed in blood; henceforth they should be footsteps only along the path of civilisation and science—footsteps amid happy and prosperous cities, and over plains which once supplied a precarious subsistence to handfuls of degraded

savages, but which now are studded with innumerable homesteads, and stand so thick with corn that they laugh and sing.

Had Philology rendered no other service than this splendid contribution to the history of mankind, she would be well worthy of our gratitude and reverence; but although she has been the *last* and youngest sister to take her seat in the fair circle of the Sciences, let me here, for one moment, pause and digress to mention how real have been the other services which she has rendered to *them* in recompense for the *methods* which they have taught to *her*. She has not only an Archæology, but also a Geology, a Chemistry, a Physiology of her own. By facts incapable of falsification, she can not only *illustrate*, but *prove*, the vast series of years necessitated to achieve her positive results;—with her languages and dialects she can throw light on one of the most important problems of science by showing in actual process before our eyes, the origin of linguistic species from a single genus;—she can, with an almost infallible certainty, and with a skill not inferior to that of the comparative anatomist, reconstruct extinct and archetypal forms of language by the comparison of divergent yet closely-related dialects;—by examining a speech subjected to foreign influences she can strikingly exemplify the phenomena of hybridism;—pointing to an immense number of languages widely separated and mutually unintelligible, and which have existed in their present

condition as far back as history can reach, she can yet prove that these species are *not* primitive; she can show that their apparently barbarous dissonance and boundless change is the result of well-understood laws, slowly working with perfect and admirable regularity; and she can show further the enormous influence which, without any sudden changes or violent catastrophes, can be exerted in the progress of centuries, by this continuous differentiation.* Many, in short, of the laws and tendencies which have so brilliantly rewarded the observation and thought of our most distinguished naturalists, —such as the struggle for existence, the importance of intermediate types, the perpetuation of accidental divergences, the powerful effect of infinitesimal changes long continued, above all, the beautiful law of analogy, the law which shows that there is 'perpetual unity in perpetual variety'—may not only be abundantly illustrated, but positively confirmed, by the researches of the philologian into dead and existing tongues. No vivisection is needed; few errors are possible. The study of language is, indeed, a sort of morbid anatomy, yet it demonstrates with unfailing accuracy the living processes which have taken place.† While we watch the growth and

* We have already seen that such terms as 'dumb' or 'stammerer' were freely and reciprocally applied to each other from very early times by nations *speaking languages which were most closely related to each other.*

† I have developed this subject in a paper on 'Philology as one of the Sciences,' *Macmillan's Magazine*, No. 111.

decay of human dialects we seem to be standing as silent but permitted spectators in the great laboratory in which nature presides over the mighty processes of life and death.

Long as a multitude of these Aryan languages had been known throughout the civilised world, and often as separate members of the family had been set side by side, centuries elapsed before the fact of their common origin, as one distinct and separate Realm of Speech, had been even suspected; and so erroneous were the hypotheses into the service of which Philology was impressed, and so unscientific the methods by which she worked, that the fact would certainly have never been demonstrated but for the discovery in India of that dead language, the Sanskrit, which in its sacred and venerated literature preserves to us one of the purest and most antique forms of the ancient mother-tongue. We may often observe children of a common family, who, at first sight, seem wholly unlike each other, and yet in whose faces we instantly detect a marked family resemblance, when we meet one or other of their parents. Now, this is very much what happened in the discovery of the Aryan unity. Sanskrit was not indeed the actual mother-speech, but it was the eldest sister, and the one which reflected most closely the maternal features. When once a few scholars had profoundly studied it, and had published their results to the world,—when such a book as Bopp's

'Comparative Grammar' had placed side by side the facts of nine such languages as Sanskrit, Zend, Armenian, Greek, Latin, Lithuanian, Slavonian, Gothic, and German, and when Prichard, Zeuss, Diefenbach, and others, had published their Celtic labours,—it could no longer remain doubtful to any reasonable man that the stately Brahmin, and the gay Frenchman, and the restless Albanian, and the Irish peasant, and the Russian serf, and the Lithuanian farmer, and the English gentleman, and the Dutch boor, nay, even the poor outcast wandering gipsy, all speak languages which were once a single and undivided form of human speech, and are all sprung from ancestors who radiated from one geographical centre which was their common home.

The proofs of this original identity of so many languages, each of which has now to be separately learnt as a foreign tongue, rest (1) in the similarity of grammatical structure, and (2) in the fundamental identity of roots. One or two illustrations will perhaps serve to set these points of resemblance in a clearer light.

1. There is in all these languages a marked similarity of grammatical structure. Every one of them is strictly inflectional, and their inflections, whether they still continue to be numerous, or whether (as is the case with English) they have dwindled down to a very few, are all formed on the

same method, and may all be demonstrably traced to the same original forms. I say *strictly* inflectional, for, although inflections exist in the Semitic languages (those of which Hebrew is a type), the real characteristic of those languages is what the Germans call *Umlaut*, i.e. a change of meaning chiefly due to the internal varying of a vowel, as in our *sing, sang, sung*. Now, by an inflectional language we mean one which expresses its moods, tenses, cases, and all other modifications of meaning in verbs and nouns by means of certain suffixes which apparently are arbitrary, which were, indeed, until quite lately, believed to be purely conventional, and therefore wholly incapable of analysis or explanation, but which are now proved to be the mutilated fragments of words, and, for the most part, of pronouns, adverbs, or simple and auxiliary verbs. The fact that such elements, which in ruder languages *retain* their original meaning, should in all this class of languages be reduced to merely formative and symbolic elements, is a proof of the high literary cultivation which these languages have undergone, and of the complete mastery and triumph of the reason and the intellect over the rude cries and imitations which were the sole materials originally at its disposal. Linguistic forms of this kind are to the human intelligence of exactly the same value as algebraic symbols are to the mathematician. They incredibly facilitate the

operations of thought. In Yameo, an aboriginal American language, the word *three* is etarrararincouroac, and this, as a French author wittily observes, is quite sufficient reason to account for their numerical system stopping at that point. The immeasurably long polysyllables of savage languages, a ponderosity due to their attempt to agglomerate a number of words without inflection or synthesis, would render literature in such languages impossible; and it is almost impossible to imagine such a thing as style, or even sustained consecutive thought, in languages which, like the Ojebway or Eskimo, have jewels fourteen-syllables-long, to express the simplest conceptions. Now it is the glory of the inflectional languages to have trampled completely on this tyranny of expression; to have reduced all the essential elements of language to conventional symbols, and yet to use them with algebraic accuracy in the expression of thought, and to simplify them by 'progressive integration' to the smallest and most convenient compass. What Greek, for instance, would have supposed that in such a word as τύψουσι, 'they will strike,' there lay hid five separate elements, viz., τυπ, the root, σ, the fragment of the verb *as*, 'to be,' a fragment of the verb *ya*, 'to go,' obliterated by contraction, and the fragment of two demonstrative pronouns which have suffered a similar fate: so that the entire meaning of the word would be

'there is going to be a blow as regards him, him?'* What Latin could have supposed that the unerring analysis of language would prove that such a word as *cecidero*, 'I shall have fallen,' is reducible to the elements 'fall-fall-going-to-be-(as regards)-me?' Or, to make the subject more clear, let me borrow a good English illustration from Professor Whitney's 'Lectures on Language.'† Take such a word as 'inapplicabilities;' it is rather a long word, an unusual word, and a word of a very abstract meaning: yet the simplest person would know at once what it meant, without, perhaps, having the faintest conception that the whole word was but a cluster of modifying syllables around the original root '*plic*,' a fold, and that it consists of the two prepositions *in* and *ad*, the root *plic*, the junction vowel *a*, the adjective termination *bili* implying power, the *ty*, which is the mark of an abstract substantive, and the *s* which is a sign of the plural; and that, further than this, every one of these elements of the word, though they have now wholly ceased to have any separate meaning or existence, was once a *separate* word with a distinct meaning of its own. Now, the Abbé Domenech tells us that such is the absolute deficiency of the most simple abstractions in some of the American languages, that

* For a fuller explanation of this synthesis see the author's *Brief Greek Syntax*, p. 5.

† Page 64.

an Indian cannot say 'I smoke,' without using such a number of concrete pictures, that his immensely long word to represent that monosyllabic action means, 'I breathe the vapour of a fire of herb which burns in a stone bowl wedged into a pierced stone.'* Imagine such a process of word-formation as this applied to a cultivated or literary language: imagine that instead of the word inapplicabilities, we were obliged to use a sort of printer's-hyphen word like 'the plural-condition-of-not-being-able-to-fold-one-thing-into-another;' imagine this, I say, and then see the immense victory which has been achieved by the Aryan race, in adopting inflectional synthesis as the basis of their grammatical structure. Or, again, take such a word as 'recommence;' which of us in ordinarily using that very common word is ever likely to be troubled by remembering that it is composed of the six elements, re-cum-in-it-i-a-re, viz., 'to be going into again with;' or which of us ever dreamt till recently that the latter *re* in that form, the *re* in which all Latin inflections end, is a demonstrable relic of *esse* (Sanskrit *as*), the infinitival form of the verb 'to be?' And yet, be it observed, that although thousands of such synthetic forms could be selected from English, English has become far less purely *inflectional* than any other language of the whole Indo-European, or Aryan family. It has discarded its inflections unsparingly;

* *Voy. dans les grands déserts du Nouveau-Monde*, p. 392.

indeed, so unsparingly that barely a dozen of them in the whole language are left in common use, and the others it has so completely pared down that they are unrecognisable to any eye but that of the philologian. Who, for instance, would imagine that the *d* in the word *had* * is the relic of an auxiliary verb which once possessed, in a single tense of the middle voice, no less than eight inflections? Yet even a *few* terminations of this kind furnish an undoubted proof that the fundamental idea and structure of English, as of all the Indo-European languages, is (in spite of its immense development of the analytical process) synthetic and inflectional. It may have happened to some of my audience to have had the rare pleasure of hearing Professor Huxley lecture, and show how the idea of the structure of the entire animal kingdom may be represented by a vertebra with two lateral processes; and how, in a lobster, for instance, every single function of every single articulation, from the jaw to the flipper, is provided for by a modification of this single structure. The demonstration is wonderful, but it is not, I think, more wonderful

* Compare I had We had
You had Ye had
He had They had

| | *Sing.* | *Dual.* | *Plur.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| with the Gothic | hab-aida | hab-aidêdu | hab-aidêdum |
| | hab-aidês | hab-aidêduts | hab-aidêduth |
| | hab-aidd | | hab-aidêdun |

than the demonstration of the manner in which man has moulded the faculty of language into a thousand different forms, which yet retain their own marked individuality, and has, without any violence or discontinuity of development, made the simplest pronouns express the most complex multiplicity of conceptions and relations.

2. But this similarity of grammatical structure in all Aryan languages is accompanied by an ultimate identity in the vast majority of roots.

It is now a matter of simple notoriety that not merely in sounds and letters, but in fundamental radical structure—and not only in words which might conceivably have been borrowed from obvious natural sounds, but in words deduced through a long series of imaginative metaphors or fanciful analogies*—the vocabulary of any single Aryan

* These cautions are exceedingly necessary. The hurry of etymologists has led them to see signs of relationship between languages radically distinct simply by virtue of a few onomatopoetic, or even purely illusory, homonyms; yet it does not need much acumen to see that *αἰγή* has no connection with the German *Auge*, or *laus* with the German *Laus!* Lars, says Professor Whitney, has as much to do with *laird* as it has with deputy-sheriff. People have compared the Polynesian *mati*, an eye, with the modern Greek, but the word in modern Greek is simply a contraction of *ὀμμάτιον*; and the Hebrew kophar with the English *cover*, although cover is a corruption of *conoperire*. Klaproth even compared the Japanese *ta tchin* with the English *teaching!* If these accidental phonetic coincidences or apparent coincidences of written words were worth noticing, one might connect the Chinese *uhr* with the German *Ohr*, or the Jenisei *eg* with the English *egg*, or the Galla *aba* with the Welsh *afon*, or the Karib *alaiba* with the Gothic *hlaifs* (loaf). Pott has some

language, in spite of the effacing influences of time, and the disturbing elements of foreign admixture, stands in a very close relation to the vocabularies of all the rest. The numerals, the pronouns, the most ordinary and essential verbs, the words for all the commonest relationships, for the parts of the body, for nearly all the domestic animals, for the most necessary cereals, and the most familiar metals, are substantially the same in all the languages of this great family. That such is the fact may be seen by any one who will take the trouble to examine a few comparative lists; but it may be more interesting to observe that even when the words in several branches are *different*, the *roots* of them all are to be found in the family possession; and that very often when the words are as absolutely unlike each other as they can possibly be, they can yet be deduced, through easy stages of differentiation, from a common original stock. As an instance of the first fact, take the word 'horse.' In Persian it is *âl*, in French *cheval*, in German *Pferd*, in Anglo-Saxon *wicg*, in Polish *koń*; and these words have no connection with each other: yet there is not, I believe, one of them which is not

excellent remarks on this subject in *Zeitschrift der deutschen morg. Ges.* ix. 405 fg. 1855) See, too, Max Müller in Bunsen, *Philos. of Hist.* i. 356: 'I believe that there is hardly a word in any language to which, making the usual allowance for change of form and meaning, some other word might not be found almost identical.' One of the first scholars to state this principle clearly was Job Ludolf in the Preface to his *Æthiopic Grammar and Lexicon*, 1702.

traceable to a Sanskrit root. The root 'horse' (if it be not, as I myself believe, ultimately an onomatopœia) may allude to the spirit of the animal (*karasa*, 'what passion'*); *cheval*, the Latin *caballus*, is from an old root, *capala*, swift. *Wicg* is probably from *vâga*, rapidity; *koń*, from *çôṇ*, 'to be red' (or bay-coloured), and so on: the simple explanation being that in the Aryan mother-speech the animal had *different* names, derived from different attributes, and in the struggle for existence which takes place among words no less than among living organisms, the effects of accident caused one form or other to prevail.†

The radical changes which are effected in the

* M. Pictet's remark (*Orig. indo.-eur.* i. 349) that the word 'cherry' has apparently the same origin ('où cependant le mot *rasa* a le sens de *suc*'), will not add to the probability of this derivation. And yet it is certain that language does seize on the most marvellous analogies. 'What the German philosopher described as the relation of a cow to a comet,' says Mr. E. B. Tylor, 'is sufficient, and more than sufficient, to the language-maker—*both have tails*.' How remote, for instance, is the apparent connection between flies and musquets, or varnish and the golden hair of an Egyptian queen? Who would have expected that the word *money* derives its origin from a temple of the goddess Juno, or that *treacle* has anything to do with wild beasts? or that the names *naphtha* and *emery* are traceable to legends about Jeremiah and King Solomon? Yet so it is.

† It is often curious to watch the effect of this struggle for existence; for instance, gold in Greek is χρυσός; in Latin it is *aurum*; yet such a word as θησαυρός, 'a treasure,' shows that χρυσὸς is a usurper, and has expelled its rival form which is triumphant in the sister tongue. Similarly, such a compound as βούκολος shows that there was once in Greek, no less than in Latin, a verb *colo*, I tend; but in Greek it has been ousted by νέμω.

sound of words by apparently trivial influences is one of the earliest lessons which we learn in etymology. The youngest tiro is hardly surprised to learn that *lieu* and *coucher* both spring from one root (*locus, collocare*), and that *habeo* lurks in the word *debt* (*de habeo = debeo*). A curious etymological paper might be written on the influence of nasals and aspirates alone, in modifying the forms of words. As instances of words which are demonstrably identical, though apparently unlike, let me take the three words *milk*, *five*, and *eye*. Who would suppose that there was any connection between the Greek γάλα and the English *milk*? Yet the Latin *lac*, as compared with the other Greek form γλάγος, gives us naturally and at once an original form, *mlag*, connected with *mulgeo* and ἀμέλγω, and all the variations at once become obvious and clear;* while, although none of these derivatives come from the Sanskrit *dughda*, yet the root *duh*, 'to milk,' from which that is derived, is seen at once in the Latin *duco*, the English *dug*, and even in the word *daughter*, which, like θυγάτηρ, *Tochter*, &c., all spring from the word *duhitar*, once applied to the maidens

* Possibly all the varieties come from an onomatopœia of the dashing of milk into the pails—*mlaksh* (see Benfey, *Griech. Wurzel.* i. 485). Bopp sees in the initial syllable of γάλα the root *gô* = cow, and compares the Irish *bleacht* = *bó-leacht*. Curtius's objection, that even in the Græco-Italic time the word *gô* had assumed the forms βοῦς, *bos*, seems fatal against this conjecture. (*Griech. Etym.* i. 123.) Bopp also connects the roots *duh* and *lac*. Donaldson connects γάλα with γελᾶν, ἁγλαος, &c. (*New Crat.* § 459.)

of the Aryan family, because it was their function to milk the cows. And while we are alluding to the word *duhitar* (daughter), who would have believed *à priori*, what yet is a certain fact, that it is the lineal ancestor, by a proved genealogy, of the Bohemian *dci*?* Again, what words could seem to be wider apart than the Greek *πέντε*, the Latin *quinque*, the French *cinq*, and the South Wallachian *tzina*, the old Irish *coic*, the Welsh *pump*, and the English *five*? † Yet these words are each and all

* The following list of names for goose, duck, swan, &c., in different Aryan languages, all meaning web-footed, and derived from *gâla*, 'a net,' and *pâd*, 'a foot,' illustrates in a very curious and striking manner the immense changes which the same root may undergo in the process of time. Until we have seen the whole list we should find it hard to believe that *cûr-pah*, *le-bedi*, and *yl-fet* were the same word.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Sanskrit* | . gâla-pâd, web-foot; goose. | *Anglo-Saxon* | . yl-fet. |
| *Persian* | { gûrah-pah, cûr-pah } duck. | *Scandinavian* | . âl-ft. |
| | | *Old German* | . al-biz. |
| *Armenian* | . gara-b, swan. | *Old Russian* | . le-bedi. |
| *Lithuanian* | . gul-ba, swan. | *Illyrian* | . la-but. |
| *Irish* | . gall-a, swan. | | |

See Pictet, i. 390.

Again, who would suppose that such a sound as *an* could, by a perfectly traceable process, become *vu* in two such allied languages as Slavonian and German (*e.g. an*derer, *vu*toro)? Yet such is the case. In Slavonian *an* becomes first a nasal sound, and is then shortened to *u*, and as *u* cannot, in that language, *begin* a word, *v* is prefixed to it, and we get *vu*. (Schleicher, *Die Deutsche Sprache*, 30.)

† The changes of almost any other numeral are equally remarkable. Compare, for instance, the Greek *τέσσαρες*, the Latin *quatuor*, the Welsh *pedwar*, the Irish *keathair*, the Sanskrit *catur*, the English *four*; or the Greek *ὀκτώ*, with the Sanskrit *ashtair*, the Welsh *wyth*, and the English *eight*.

of them directly connected with the same root as the Sanskrit *pañcan*, which is derived from the word *pâni*, the hand, and they are connected with it not by accident, still less by caprice, but by laws easily demonstrable and perfectly understood. And similarly, by a process of direct affiliation, we can prove the identity of the Greek *τίς*, the Latin *quis*,* the Gothic *hvas*, the German *wer*, and the English *who* with the Sanskrit *kas*; and can deduce the English word *eye*, the French *œil*, the Gothic *augo*, the Lithuanian *anku*, the Latin *oculus*, the Greek *ὄμμα*, the *ow* in window, and the *y* in daisy, from the Sanskrit *akshi*,* though many of them have not a letter in common. To multiply instances would be needless. Even a schoolboy knows that *dens* and *tooth*, *δίκη* and *judge*, *coucher* and *locus*, *larme* and *tear*, *dies*, and *jour*, *vingt* and *εἴκοσι*, *galaxy* and *lettuce*, *cousin* and *sister*, *savage* and *ὕλη*, *wig* and *perruque*, absolutely unlike each other as they look, spring immediately and directly from common roots.†

Since, then, the same grammatical principles, the

* Boltz, *Die Sprache und ihr Leben*, 46.

† Apropos, however, of *wig* and *perruque* (*pilus*, *pilusculus*, *perruque*, *periwig*—*wig*) where, as in 'bus' for *omnibus*, the tail of the word has (as in some decapitated annelid) assumed a separate existence, it may be worth while to remark that the influence of *diminutives* sometimes greatly obscures the origin of a word. Thus, the modern Greek *φείδι* seems to have no connection with *ὄφις* till we think of *ὀφίδιον*, or *μάτι* with *ὀψ* till we think of *ὄπ-μα*. *ὀπ-μάτιον*.

same laws of structure, dominate throughout the Aryan languages, and since, even when their apparent differences are most obvious, it may yet be proved that there is a complete identity in their main roots, there can be no shadow of a doubt as to the meaning of this table of the Aryan languages. It represents no ingenious speculation, no conjectural affinities, but is intended to represent in a single *coup d'œil* the striking truth that the many living, no less than the dead languages whose names are contained in it, were once but *one* language, and that the many peoples—including all the most powerful and the most celebrated which the world has ever seen—whose existence it represents, sprang within an almost historical period from one common stock. The epoch of their migrations from their common home cannot be determined with any certainty, but possibly it may not have been earlier than 2000 B.C. The most ancient name by which they called themselves, or rather the most ancient name of this race with which we are acquainted, was the name *Aryas*, a name derived from the root *ar*,* to plough, and which therefore implied originally an agricultural as distinguished from a rude and nomadic race, and thus naturally came to mean 'noble.' It is true that this name belonged distinctively to the

* Perhaps, in its more primitive and general sense, implying upward or forward motion. It is a word from which have sprung countless derivatives. See an admirable account of this root in Professor Max Müller's *Lectures* (First Series, 2nd ed. 283 seqq.).

two great eastern branches of this family, the Iranian * and Indian; but as they lingered the longest in the region of the primitive home, they are most likely to have retained the original name; and not only are *traces* of the same root to be found abundantly in the other families of the race, but it is even believed that the beloved and familiar name of Erin † is a far-off western echo of this primeval designation. As the name Indo-Germanic, which was originally proposed, is obviously too narrow and exclusive, and as Indo-European, which conveniently represents them by geographical area, is also too narrow for the universal and growing colonies which this race has founded even in the remotest islands of the Pacific, it is clear that *Aryan* remains at present the best name by which to call them. Their *original home* may be assigned by a multitude of concurrent probabilities.‡ That it was somewhere in the vast plateau of Iran, in the immense quadrilateral which extends from the Indus to the

* The old name of the Medes was Ἄριοι, *Herod.* vii. 62.

† See an interesting note in Professor Max Müller's *Survey of Languages*, 28.

‡ Lassen, *Ind. Alterthumsk.* i. 256. Pictet, *Orig. indo-eur.* 35–42. Weber, *Indische Skizzen.* So far as I am aware, Benfey alone places the original home of the Aryans in Europe. He is led to do so, in part, because of the absence of the root 'lion' in Sanskrit and Persian (*Gesch. der Sprachw.* 600); but his reasons are exceedingly inadequate. Out of many names for lion there is nothing strange in the disappearance of one. Any animal which is not very common, or generally distributed, is sure to be known by a number of different local names.

Euphrates, and from the Oxus to the Persian Gulf, may be assumed as almost certain; and we may fairly conclude, by the aid of tradition and other circumstances, that it was immediately north of the great chain of the Hindoo-Koosh, west of the Bolor range, or the ancient Imaus,* in the central region of Bactriana, a district so fair, and fertile, and flourishing, that it was called by Orientals 'the mother of cities.' This region was eminently suited to become the cradle of that princely race of shepherds from whose loins sprang the nations of Europe, and which, at a period long after China and Egypt had reached the apogee of their crude civilisation, was still creating in the bosom of its peaceful families the eternal words which, as the law of many a noble, chivalrous, and Christian country, were destined to become 'honour,' 'virtue,' and 'duty.' †

In this region, amid scenery, 'grandiose yet severe'—where Nature *yields* her treasures, but does not *lavish* them, and is far more admirably adapted than the cruel North or the enervating tropics to develope and reward the persevering industry of man—lived a race, unguessed at by history, unknown even to tradition, but revealed by philology—a race beautiful in person, pure in morals, earnest

* The name Imaus (Skr. *himavat*, 'snowy') was originally applied to the Hindoo Koosh, but afterwards to that chain running north and south—the meridian axis of Central Asia—sometimes called the Bolor range.

† Renan, *Orig. du Lang.* 235.

in thought, simple in habits, which, in a peaceful life, and under a patriarchal government, wrought out, as a means of its own precocious development, a language admirable for the wealth, harmony, and perfection of its forms, full of poetic images and pregnant metaphors, and carrying in itself the germ of a magnificent expansion; and, with this language to aid it, the same happy race learnt to acquire ideas which were destined to bear fruit a hundredfold hereafter in the conquest, colonisation, free institutions, and unceasing Christian progress of the civilised world.

The causes which led to their emigration from their peaceful home—what made the great tide of Aryan emigration roll majestically in a western direction—the order in which they wandered forth to win new thoughts and conquer fresh countries—why it was that the Zincala, from the cordilleras of Guatemala to the plains of Poland, became for ever a homeless wanderer over the surface of the earth—what drove the Norwegian and the Icelander ever farther and farther towards the inclement and pine-clad North—why the Kelt first ensconced himself behind the storm-swept cliffs of Britain—what happy destiny guided one great family to the plains of Persia and Hindostan, and another to the shores of the blue Mediterranean and the poetic hills of Italy and Greece—we cannot tell. Whether it was the result of religious divisions, or physical

convulsions, or civil feuds—whether it was due to the gradual dissolution or the sudden dismemberment of tribal relations—whether it was simply caused by the natural growth of population, or by the restless spirit of enterprise—whether the tribes passed away under different leaders in a succession of waves, each wave driving its predecessor farther towards the West and South—all this is buried in eternal oblivion; but the *main* fact is certain, that 'westward the course of empires took its way,' and the conclusions on which we are about to dwell may be regarded as established in their broad outlines if not in their more minute details.

If you will look at this ellipse, with its lines radiating from one of the foci, which here represents the common cradle of the race, it will give you a conception—general indeed, and by no means indisputable, but yet founded on data which may be regarded as at least approximately correct—both of

the geographical position of the divergent families and of their direction and relative distances from the original stock. Farthest, you will observe, from the original home are the Kelts; nearest to it

are the Hindoos and Persians; next to them come the Greeks and Slavonians; while the Germans and Latins occupy an intermediate position. Looking both to geography and history, we may, without any extravagance, infer that the *first* to move * westward were the Kelts, and the *last* the Slavonians, who, finding the rest of Europe already occupied, were forced to make their new home in its northern and eastern regions. At any rate, the parents of these nations, under whatever circumstances, *did* wander away from the regions in which they first appeared; their communications with their old home became infrequent; new methods of life arose; new national characteristics were developed; new dialects multiplied; they forgot their Asian origin and their mutual relationships, and soon learned to regard themselves as autochthonous on the soil which they possessed. The old home was gradually abandoned, and the children went into far countries to take an independent part in the hastening *dénouement* of the great drama of humanity, and to enrich by special characteristics the noble heritage of their common endowments.

Let us now consider a little more closely this great table before us.

At the top of it you will see the words, Primitive Language of the Aryan Race, and you will observe the implication that this original language is not for

* Pictet, *Les Origines indo-européennes, ou les Aryas primitifs*, i. 50, from which this illustration is taken.

a moment asserted to have been the primitive language of *mankind.*

All that we assert is that it was the primitive language of *a race of mankind* whose different offshoots, at various periods of history down from its earliest dawn, established the Achæmenid dynasty, built Athens and Lacedæmon, founded Rome, worked the tin mines of Cornwall, and the silver mines of Spain, first made London a city of ships, occupied Paris while Paris was still but the mud city of the borderers, produced the Vedas and the Homeric poems, and the Sháh-náméh, and the Eddas, and the Nibelungen-Lied,—invented the printing-press, discovered America, circumnavigated the globe, developed the principles of every science, and, in a word, founded that immense and marvellous system of modern civilisation which is the chief triumph of the intellect of man.

Whether ultimately all languages are not dialects of one—whether millenniums back, in the impenetrable night of ages, there ever was a period when *all* the representatives of the entire human family (if such representatives there were) expressed themselves in the same forms of speech—is a question which will certainly never be settled, and which as certainly there is no shadow of linguistic evidence to prove. Nor is there anything but *à priori* reasoning of a very dubious character to show that even this original speech of the *particular* branch of

the human race to which we belong ever passed through the stages here dubiously indicated of monosyllabism and agglutination—stages which I hope to make clearer in another Lecture—before it attained the inflectional character.* This original speech has of course been dead for ages, and even Sanskrit, its oldest and purest representative, is dead, and Keltic, its next oldest representative, is dying; but from comparison of all its representatives—though it perished long before history began, though no vestige of it on rock, or pyramid, or gem, or coin, or poem preserved by immemorial tradition, now remains—its forms can be conjecturally restored. To restore them in this manner was the object of the celebrated Compendium of Professor August Schleicher. But even this language is only reproducible in its perfect and full-grown condition. How it grew we know not. 'No man saw the Tree planted—no mortal hand watered the bursting of the grove: no register was kept of the gradual widening of its girth, or the growing circumference of its shade, till the unexpected bole stands forth in all its magnitude, carrying aloft in its foliage the poetry, the history, and the philosophy of heroic peoples.' But although the labours of

* It is remarkable that Dante, rising superior to the prejudices of his age, attached no faith to the popular misconception that Hebrew was the primitive language. 'La lingua ch' io parlai *fu tutta spenta*' are the words which he puts into the mouth of Adam. (*Paradiso*, canto xxvi.)

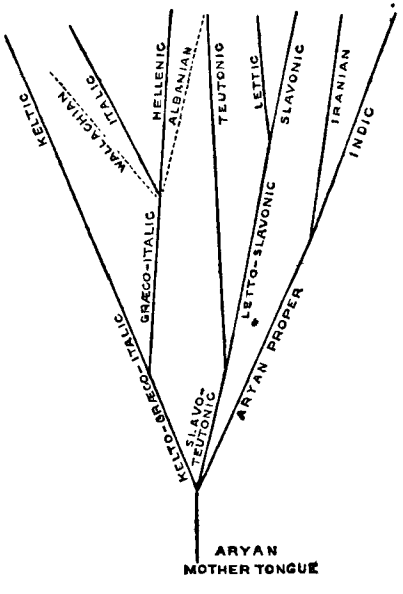
recent scholars have recovered for us, with tolerable certainty, many words of this ancient tongue, yet all that we know of it *historically* is that, in very early times, a great split in it must have taken place in consequence of the westward divergence of two great divisions of the hitherto united race which spoke it. To the division which occupied the northern, central, and eastern parts of Europe, we may give the name of Letto-Slavo-Teutonic, derived from the nationalities into which it was afterwards differentiated. To the division which occupied the southern and western peninsulas of Europe we may give the name of Græco-Italic. Earlier, perhaps, than either of these great divisions, the ancestors of the once wide-spread and mighty race of the Kelts had wandered into Europe. The area over which Keltic names are found diffused shows the original extent of their dominion; but they were gradually dispossessed of its central regions by the advancing Teutons, before whom they have constantly retired to the westward, and before whom their remote Irish descendants are still migrating beyond the Atlantic. For a long period after the first beginning of this westward Exodus, the Aryans proper, *i.e.* the ancestors of the Persians and Hindoos, were still lingering in or near their old Iranian home,* confined there partly perhaps by their love

* These general results are represented in the table of Aryan languages which accompanies this Lecture. The *main* conclusion

and reverence for it, and partly by the girdle of deep rivers and mighty ranges of snowy hills which barred its southern and eastern boundaries.

Now as all these events took place in the prehistoric periods of this race, you may naturally ask the grounds on which we rest such inferences, or why we represent them as being in any degree probable.

may be tabulated as follows. Similar linguistic trees may be found in Schleicher, *Die Deutsche Sprache*, 81, and *Compend. d. vergl. Gramm.* 7; and a table like the larger one is furnished in Dr.




Boltz's excellent little book, *Die Sprache und ihr Leben.* I differ, however, from these authorities in several important particulars, and especially in the position assigned to the Keltic languages.

The question is a very natural one, and I answer at once that the proofs are almost entirely linguistic in their character. They rest generally on the fact that certain roots—such, for instance, as those which express the numerals, the pronouns, the domestic animals, the near degrees of relationship, and other early and necessary conceptions—are (as we have already observed) common to every branch of this great family; whereas other roots are common only to the western or the eastern members of it, showing most distinctly that there was a certain heritage of roots and linguistic ideas *common to the entire undivided race*, while others could only have been developed *separately*, as occasion for them arose, long after the family had been split asunder.

If, for instance, we examine the names of plants and trees in these Aryan languages, we find the generic name for tree, branch, stem, &c., common to them all; but when we come to the *specific* nomenclature, we find words running through all the European family, which are totally distinct from those of Hindostan. In Hindostan the Aryans encountered a tropical vegetation, entirely unlike the temperate one to which they had been accustomed on the Iranian plateau. There was but one tree which they recognised; it was the tree which for so many centuries of English education was regarded as the necessary tree of knowledge—the tree which, if I may be pardoned the allusion, has so often

'blushed with patrician blood'—I mean the awful and venerable birch. *Bhurrja* is the Sanskrit name for 'birch;' and as it was the only tree which the Aryans, coming as conquerors from the North, were able to recognise, it is also the only tree whose name is common to Sanskrit and the languages of Europe.* A similar argument may be derived from the root *lin* in 'linen.' We indeed have adopted from Anglo-Saxon the word *flax*, which is derived from the same root as the Greek πλέκω, I weave; but in nearly all the European languages we find for flax such words as the Greek λίνον, the Latin *linum*, Gothic *lein*, the Irish *lin*, the Welsh *llin*, and the Russian *lenu*; yet in the languages of India, early as the cultivation of flax was known, we find for its name such wholly different roots as *atasì* and *ûma*; showing clearly that the *Western* Aryans must have known and used this plant while they were a *yet undivided* body, yet *after* the great split which separated them from the Aryans of the east. And this indeed is but *one* out of many concurrent indications which all tend to prove the remarkable and interesting conclusion that the Eastern Aryans continued to be mainly a pastoral race, long after agriculture had been greatly developed among their brethren of the west.† We should arrive at

* Klaproth's *Nouv. Journ. asiat.* v. 112. The root is connected with the English *bark*, Scandinavian *börk*, Gothic *brikan*, Greek *ῥήγ-νυμι*, Latin *frango*, &c. See Pictet, *Orig. ind.-eur.* p. 218.

† The vocabulary of agriculture is not common to the whole

exactly the same conclusion from an examination of the Indian and European names for domestic animals, which are mostly coincident, and for wild animals, many of which are divergent; and from the names for the badger, the beaver, the hedgehog, and various birds. The argument is very strikingly confirmed from another very different source. If we examine the words for oyster, we find that throughout Europe they all involve the same root, viz. Greek *ὄστρεον*, Latin *ostrea*, Scandinavian *ôstra*, French *huître*, Irish *oisridh*, Welsh *oestren*, Russian *ustersü*, Armenian *osdri*,—and so on,—all derived probably from the same root as the Latin *os*, and descriptive of the bony shell of the mollusc, and all totally different from the Sanskrit *pushtika*. The only inference from this fact is that the Western Aryans became familiar with the Caspian Sea, and therefore with oysters, long before their eastern brethren, who, not meeting with them till they reached the shores of the Indian Ocean, hit upon another name for them, derived from an entirely

Aryan family, or even to all its western branches. The roots which are found in Sanskrit had, in that language, a general and not a special signification; e.g. *agras* means, not a cultivated field, but *a plain*; *gîrna*, not corn, but anything pounded; *aritram*, not plough, but that which furrows the sea, i.e. an oar and a keel; *venas*, not wine, but any agreeable drink. See Mommsen, *Röm. Gesch.* I. ch. ii. The only cereal the name of which is evidently common to all the Aryans is *yava*, *ζειά*, barley and spelt, to which they seem to have attached great importance, and which is said to have been found wild on the banks of the Euphrates. See Lassen, *Ind. Alterth.* i. 247.

different root.* And the value of these methods of reasoning consists in the fact that they are constantly getting fresh light thrown upon them from different and wholly unexpected quarters. Take, for instance, the conjecture about the Caspian Sea; if it be correct we should naturally look for a confirmation of it in the entire class of words descriptive of navigation. Now this is, to a very remarkable extent, the case: from comparing the words which are common and the words which are divergent, we see that the undivided Aryans were indeed acquainted with *boats* and *oars* for the navigation of their rivers—the Oxus and its affluents, and therefore that *these things* are named by common roots through the entire family, from extreme north-west to extreme south-east; but considering that they had not extended at that time so far as the shores of the Caspian, and that even when one branch of them did reach that sea, the Caspian is in no sense a highroad of nations, and therefore offers no temptations for the development of navigation, all the words which describe the *higher parts of navigation*, —the words for sail, and mast, and rudder, &c.— not only differ from each other in many European languages (as they did even in Greek and Latin †),

* See Pictet, i. 320, 440–455 passim, 515, &c.

† Thus navis and ναῦς, ἐρετμὸς and remus, are clearly the same words; but ἱστίον has no connection with velum, στεῖρα with carina, πηδάλιον or οἴαξ with gubernaculum, κεραία with antenna, ἱστὸς with

but also in Sanskrit and Persian furnish no sort of analogy to their European synonyms.*

You will, I think, see how clearly by arguments like these the fact of a first general division in this race is proved, and it is on similar evidence, partly linguistic, partly ethnographical, partly geographical, partly historic, that the whole of the accompanying table depends. You will observe that eight distinct families—the Indian, the Iranian, the Hellenic, the Italic, the Keltic, the Slavonic, the Lithuanian, and the Teutonic†—have all sprung from the parent stem, and I purpose to conclude the present Lecture by a brief glance at these eight families. My task will be rendered far shorter, and your own understanding of the subject will be far more distinct and real, if you will be so kind as to take my remarks in connection with the accompanying map and tables, which have been drawn up for their illustration.

I. Earliest, in all probability, to break off from the yet undivided race was the Kelto-Græco-Italic family, which afterwards settled into the three im-

malum, κάλοι with rudentes, &c. The immigrations into Italy were all by land, and hence Italy was unknown even to Homer.

* Pictet, ii. 179–188. Similar arguments may be derived from the varying laws of reduplication, from interchange of letters, &c. See Ferrar, *Comp. Gram.* pp. 21, 96, &c.

† Several of these families called themselves by names quite different from those by which they were known to the world. Cf. Rasena and Etrusci; Græci and Ἕλληνες; Wallachian and Românî; Gypsy and Zincali; Alemanos, Germani, Tedeschi, and Deutschen.

portant branches, Greeks, Latins, and Kelts. In course of time this family occupied almost all the rivers, coasts, and islands of southern and western Europe, and for us it is a most interesting and memorable division of the race, since it not only furnished the basis of our nationality, but also the chief elements of our political, social, and intellectual existence.

i. The Keltic family—whose narrowed and no longer independent dominions are coloured orange on the map—is a branch of the Aryan race, in which we ought to feel the deepest and liveliest interest, because its direct descendants are united to us by the closest ties, and because no small portion of its blood is flowing in our veins. It was, we have some ground to believe, the first to wander, as it was the farthest in its wandering from the old home, and in consequence of this it was among the last to be recognized as a member of the family. Our own islands, where in very early days we find this Aryan settlement fishing in their osier coracles, and working the superficial veins of tin in Cornwall, furnished the Kelts with their securest refuge and their latest home. From very early days they were truly 'a nation scattered and peeled.' Subjugated by Roman and Teuton, or fairly driven away by the victorious arms of these invaders from the immense territories which once they occupied, the purest relics of their language, and the lonely cromlechs and Druidic

circles which still remain as the melancholy memorials of their religion, are chiefly to be found in Ireland, Wales, the Highlands, and the little island of Man. But it is doubtful whether these few material and linguistic records will long continue to be preserved. The Cornish language perished with Dolly Dentreath in 1770. Manx will probably follow it in another generation. Bas-Breton and Gaelic are shrinking within very contracted limits; and who shall say how long Welsh and Irish will withstand the encroaching force of railroads and telegraphs? But even if the languages of the Kelt should perish, the traces of their past power will long remain. 'Mountains and rivers,' says Sir Francis Palgrave, 'still murmur the voice of nations long denationalized or extirpated.' Though the glossaries of Gael and Cymry should utterly pass away, the names they gave to the grandest features of many a landscape will still live upon the map.*

* 'In the geographical nomenclature of *Germany, Switzerland, Italy, France, Spain*, and *England*, we find a Celtic stratum underlying the superficial deposit of Teutonic and Romanic names.'—Taylor, *Words and Places*, p. 203. See too Diefenbach's *Celtica*, and Bunsen's *Phil. of Univ. Hist.* i. 148. The purest remaining form of Keltic is to be found in old Irish glosses, versions, &c., of the eighth or ninth centuries, the period when Ireland was a 'mother of saints.' The oldest Keltic roots have been preserved for us in Greek and Latin writers, not only in the forms of such proper names as Brennus, Caradoc, Caswallan, Bonduca, &c., but also in such words as *bascauda*, 'basket,' which owe their preservation to their bizarre sound and appearance. See Garnett's *Essays*, p. 161.

A Keltic colony in Galatia preserved its distinctive language for some centuries after Christ.

ii. Of the Hellenic family I need say but little. It would be impossible, as you know, to exaggerate the part they have played in the world's history. There was no depth of philosophy which they did not sound, no height of poetry to which they did not soar. The whole region of human thought yet thrills with the electric shock of their genius; and of their art we may say, adopting the address of the poet to its mythic representative,

> Weep for Dædalus, all that is fairest,
> All that is tuneful in air or wave,
> Shapes whose beauty is richest and rarest
> Deck with your sighs and songs his grave.

Never did the language of man attain a greater perfection of synthetic grace, forceful accuracy, and inflectional precision than among this marvellous people. 'Greek,' says Henry Nelson Coleridge, 'the shrine of the genius of the old world; as universal as our race, as individual as ourselves: of infinite flexibility, of indefatigable strength; with the complication and distinctness of nature herself, to which nothing was vulgar, from which nothing was excluded; speaking to the ear like Italian, speaking to the mind like English; at once the variety and picturesqueness of Homer, the gloom and intensity of Æschylus; not compressed to the closest by

A glance at the table will show that the two main divisions of the Keltic language are Gaelic (or Erse)—including Irish, Highland Scotch, and Manx; and Cymric,—including Welsh, the dead Cornish, and the dying Armorican or Bas-Breton.

Thucydides, not fathomed to the bottom by Plato, not sounding with all its thunders, nor lit up with all its ardours under the Promethean touch of Demosthenes himself.'

But besides its intrinsic beauty, and the unequalled wealth of its literature, there are many reasons which make the study of Greek invaluable to the philologian. (i.) In the first place, in spite of the numerous modifications which it must have undergone previous to the discovery of writing, it has preserved with extraordinary fidelity, and in some cases with a nicety superior to that of Sanskrit itself, the most delicate refinements of verbal inflection; and while maintaining a perfect mastery over the power of compounding words, it has kept this synthesis from degenerating, as it does in Sanskrit, into immeasurable polysyllables. (ii.) In the second place, not only do its records extend, almost unaltered, over a period of more than a thousand years, from Homer down to Tzetzes and Eustathius, nay, even down to Theophanes and Malalas,—so that during this long period the minutest modifying influences have left upon the language their indelible impressions, and we are able to examine their operation at leisure,—but, further than this, the Greek language, with changes comparatively insignificant, has continued to be a spoken language to this day, so that in comparing a song of Riga with an Homeric rhapsode, we can estimate the

effects of time and circumstance on human speech over a space of some three millenniums. In no other language which the world has ever heard would it be possible to find the works of writers separated from each other by such enormous epochs, and yet equally intelligible to anyone who has been trained in the classical form of the language. Cicero was totally unable to understand the Salian hymns, and no ordinary Englishman could, without a vocabulary, explain the meaning of Layamon's Brut; but place side by side a page of Herodotus, a page of Plutarch, a page of Anna Comnena, and a page of Trikupi, and any clever schoolboy would be able to construe any one of them with equal facility, and could thus contrast the style and language of a Greek historian who flourished 450 years before Christ with the style and language of Greek historians who flourished, respectively 70, 1110, and 1860 years after Christ. (iii.) Nor, in the third place, is this all, for during no small portion of these ages we possess documents of this language in various *dialects*. Had Sanskrit never been discovered, yet if the main conception of comparative philology had once suggested itself to the mind of scholars, some of the most valuable linguistic laws might still have been established from a comparison with each other of the Greek dialects alone. Their skilful combination would have furnished us with a near approximation to not a few of the original

Aryan forms;* and as dialects continue to exist even in modern Greek, it is hardly possible to exaggerate the amount of philological insight which could be attained by a comparative study of the forms of this single language, in all its rich and numerous varieties, from the Æolic of 1000 B.C., to the Tzaconian† of to-day.

In the little linguistic tree given on a previous page, it will be observed that from the Græco-Italic stem issue, on either side, two dotted lines representing respectively the Albanian‡ and the Wallachian. The Wallachian, of which we shall speak hereafter, stands in the same relation to Latin as Albanian does to Greek. The true position of Albanian has long been a subject of enquiry and dispute. That it is, however, essentially an Aryan language, although largely intermixed with other elements, is now universally admitted.§ In spite of its Turkish

* See, for instance, such books as Ahrens *De Dialectis*; Curtius, *Grundzüge der griechischen Etymologie*; and Leo Meyer, *Vergl. Gramm. d. griech. und latein. Sprachen.*

† The Tzaconian is a dialect spoken on the southern shores of the Gulf of Nauplia. See an interesting tract by M. Deville, *Le Dialecte tzaconien.*

‡ The Albanians occupy parts of the ancient Epirus and Illyrium. They call themselves Skipetars or Mountaineers, and the Turks call them Arnauts (= Arbanites). A specimen of an Albanian song may be found in the notes to the second canto of *Childe Harold.*

§ Bopp, in his treatise *Ueber das Albanesische*, 1855, said that it 'zwar entschieden der indo-europäischen Familie angehört, aber in ihren Grundbestandtheilen mit keiner der übrigen Sanskritschwestern unsres Erdtheils in einem engeren, oder gar in einem Abstammungs-verhältnisse steht,' p. 1.

and other agglomerations, if Xylander be correct in his computation that one-fifth of the words are of Latin and one-eighth of Greek origin, we can hardly be far wrong in regarding it as a debased representative of the yet undivided Græco-Italic, which Professor Pott calls the Illyrian,* and which some may prefer to call the Pelasgic stem. 'It probably preceded the Hellenes,' says Pott, 'in its occupation of the Greek peninsula, and was afterwards broken by the Hellenic tribes pressing onwards from the north, and partly displaced. If the famous name of Pelasgoi had really an ethnic meaning, and were not an unsubstantial and merely chronological designation of early aborigines in general, the Illyrian would best answer to this name.'

iii. The Italic family has hardly been of less importance to us, and to the human race, than the Hellenic. Many a century must still continue to elapse before the world ceases to feel the stern grasp of their once iron hand. How deeply in-

* In an admirable letter to Professor Max Müller (*Survey of Languages*, p. 60, 2nd ed.). 'The old Illyrian,' he says, 'is one of the most comprehensive and most ancient stocks of Europe, though at present it exists only as a ruin. In this respect it is like the Iberian, represented by the small remnant of the Basks, and the Rhætian, probably closely allied with the Etruscan.' The chief works on the Albanian are (besides that of Bopp, quoted in the previous note) and Xylander, Hahn, *Albanesische Studien*, 1854; Reinhold, *Noctes Pelasgicæ*, 1855; Fallmerayer, *Ueb. Urspr. und Alterth. der Albanesen*, 1858.

teresting are all the lines which radiate from the Italic centre on the annexed table, the dead Oscan and Umbrian, the dead Provençal and Langue d'Oil, and the living Romance languages, which are affiliated to Latin by so direct a descent,—which are, in fact, little more than Latin subjected to a progressive analysis,—of which one is the language of Camoens, and one the language of Calderon and of Cervantes, and one the language of Dante and Tasso, and one the language of Bossuet and of Descartes. The language of the Italic family cannot boast of the subtle grace, harmony, and finish of Greek, any more than its ancient literature can be placed in comparison with that of the Hellenes. The Latin verb, as an instrument for the expression of accurate thought, is immensely inferior to the Greek. It bears the stamp of such obvious defects as a loss of the aorist, and of the perfect participle active. The absence of an article is another mark of inferiority, and perhaps from the rude contact of some aboriginal language Latin lost, more and more, its original flexibility. The fact that the necessity for synthesis in our scientific nomenclature drives us to frame it almost entirely from Greek elements, when we should so much more naturally have gone to Latin, shows how completely Latin had lost the faculty for framing compound words. Yet with what wonderful force does the renovating power of language remedy

these defects, and frame even out of its own deficiencies new elements of compression and strength. One might say that, like the Gallionella Ferruginea, the Latin language had articulations of iron. It is pre-eminently 'the voice of Empire and of Law, of War and of the State,—the best language for the measured research of History, and the indignant declamation of moral satire; rigid in its constructions, parsimonious in its synonyms; yet majestic in its bareness, impressive in its conciseness; the true language of history, instinct with the spirit of nations, and not with the passions of individuals; breathing the maxims of the world, and not the tenets of the schools; one and uniform in its air and spirit, whether touched by the stern and haughty Sallust, by the open and discursive Livy, by the reserved and thoughtful Tacitus.'

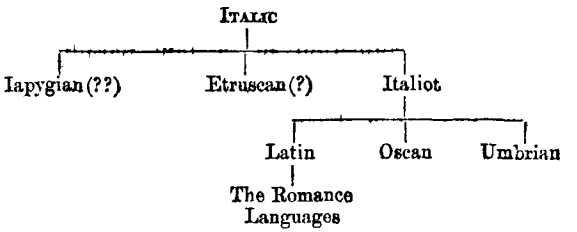
With Greek and Latin alone as the instruments of education we possess, if only we knew how to use them rightly, not only the keys to the richest and mightiest literature of the ancient world, but also the best means for the proper comprehension of human language as an expression of the inmost nature of man's mind. There is, perhaps, scarcely one principle of speech which could not be illustrated and rendered easily comprehensible by an intelligent instruction in these two classical languages; and by a comparison of Latin with Italian, or French, or Spanish, we may learn in a most

interesting manner that law of progress from synthesis to analysis, which is, in fact, nothing else than the process of perpetual renovation in the midst of perpetual decomposition, which willingly sacrifices grace of form for distinctness of expression, and which gains in simplicity and general adaptability for every purpose what it loses in intensity and finish. No profound knowledge of metaphysics is attainable without a careful study of the phenomena of language; and in no languages can metaphysical phenomena be better studied than in Latin and Greek. It is only our way of handling the classical languages which makes them so ludicrously infructuous for educational purposes; it is only because we sacrifice a knowledge of literature, and of all that makes a language best worth learning, to an idle and painful attempt to make *all boys alike* do something which is miscalled 'composition;' it is only because teachers think they have done their duty when they have spent years in failing to hammer into youthful minds the recollection of a few paradigms and two or three dozen of common idioms, not one of which has ever been reasonably explained to them; it is only because in the days of Bopp, and Grimm, and Pott, and Schleicher, classics are taught considerably worse than they were in the days of Erasmus—it is, I say, only on these accounts that the whole system of classical instruction has

fallen into natural disrepute. It is not surprising that men should declare it time to lay the axe at the root of a tree which so many of its professed guardians condemn to a hopeless sterility incapable of producing either leaves or fruit.

In ancient Italy we can trace the existence of three entirely separate languages: * the Iapygian, which was gradually driven into the extreme south, and is probably the aboriginal language of the peninsula; the Etruscan, of which we know but little, but which appear to have had at least some Aryan affinities; and the Italic, in which are observable three main dialects—Latin, Oscan, and Umbrian.† Oscan lasted down to the time of the empire, but is now only known to us by various inscriptions. The most important remains of Umbrian are to be found in the celebrated Eugubine tables—seven bronzed tablets found at Gubbio, the ancient Iguvium.

* We may tabulate the Italic family as follows:—




† The main works on Oscan and Umbrian are: Mommsen, *Oskische Studien*; Lepsius, *De tabulis Eugubinis*; Aufrecht and Kirchhoff, *Die umbrischen Sprachdenkmäler*, 1849-1851.

Of Italian, French, Spanish, and Portuguese,—languages which may be studied with the utmost ease by any one desirous of doing so, it is needless to speak,* but we may say a word about the less known Wallachian, or *limba romanesca*. It is divided by the Danube into two dialects, the northern and southern,† and, as already remarked, stands in much the same relation to Latin that Albanian does to Greek. Its grammar, except in the postposition of the article (e. g. *ochiu'l* for *oculus ille*, 'the eye') ‡ closely resembles that of the other Romance languages, but it has adopted a new alphabet based on the Cyrillic,§ and has borrowed from its

* French, as will be seen from the table, is a descendant of the Langue d'oil, i. e. of the dialect in which oil (=hoc illud=*oui*) was used for 'yes;' in Provençal oc (=hoc) was used for 'yes.' Similarly German was sometimes called the Langue d'*jò* or *ja*, and Italian the *Langue de sì* (Dante, *De Vulg. Eloq.*, i. 8). Cf. *Inferno*, cant. xxxiii. 79:

'Ahi Pisa, vituperio delle genti
Del bel paese là dove il *sì* suona.'

The dominion of French as *par excellence* the language of cultivated society began very early. In 1275 a Venetian writer says that it 'court parmi le monde,' and Brunetto Latini, Dante's master, writing his Trésor in French, does so 'parce que la parlure de France est plus commune à toutes gens et plus délectable.'

† Of the Northern or Daco-Romanic dialect there is a grammar and small dictionary by Clemens, 1836 (2nd ed.), and a grammar by Alexi; of the Southern or Macedo-Wallachian there is a grammar by Bojadschi, 1803, and Ad. Mussafia, 1868.

‡ E.g. 'Omu'l este moritoriu,' man is mortal. A similar peculiarity is found in Basque.

§ Some account of the Cyrillic alphabet may be found in Max Müller's *Survey of Language*, p. 44, sqq.

neighbours a large number of Slavonic words. Pott* believes the Wallachians to belong to a common national stock with the Albanians as far as their *blood*, not as far as their *language*, is concerned. 'The Wallachian,' he says, 'is decidedly a Romanic language. It owes its origin chiefly to Roman colonies sent into Dacia by Trajan. Yet both Albanians and Wallachians are, in blood, descendants of the ancient Illyrians.'

The Romaunt and Provençal dialect—the language of the Troubadours—is dead, and the patois which mainly owe their origin to it, and which are known as Rhæto-romanic, Romanisch, Churwälsch, or Engadinisch, are too unimportant to need special notice.†

II. The other great divergent group which streamed away from the yet stationary Iranian and Indian families may be called the Slavo-Letto-Teutonic of which we must next proceed briefly to speak.

iv. The Teutons,‡ pressing ever westward, split into two branches, a northern or Scandinavian, and a southern or Teutonic branch.§ Before we say

* Letter to Max Müller, *ubi supra*, p. 62.

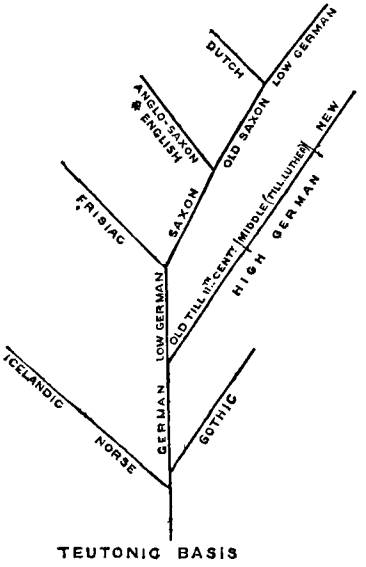
† Such books as there are on the *patois*—chiefly a grammar and dictionary by Conradi—are mentioned by Benfey, *Gesch. d. Sprachw.* 652.

‡ Both 'Deutsch' and 'Teut' are derived from *thiud*, 'people.' So Innuit, the name by which the Eskimo call themselves, means 'a man;' and Illinois is a corruption of *Illeni*, which has a similar meaning. The derivation of German is much disputed, but probably it is connected with 'guerre,' and means 'warrior.'

§ Schleicher, *Die deutsche Sprache*, p. 81.

anything about it you may be interested to see the clear form in which Schleicher represents the genealogical affinity of its branches.

This linguistic tree explains itself, but we may briefly say that when the Teutonic had begun a course independent of the Slavo-lettic division it parted into three directions, viz. Gothic, German proper, and Norse.




a. The old Norse, the genuine language of Scandinavia, was best and longest preserved in Iceland, where it continues with but little alteration to the present day. It possesses for us an immortal interest, not only because of its linguistic value, but because

in it alone are preserved those songs and legends which elsewhere were swept away or essentially altered by the jealousy of Christian converts, but which, undisturbed in that far-off corner of the world, reveal to us the grand and striking mythology of our heathen ancestors. The Eddas, though not perhaps older, in their present form, than the tenth century, are yet of priceless value, not only for their own intrinsic beauty, but because from them alone can we learn of what stuff our heroic ancestors were made.

The Swedish and Danish may be called New Norse; they have become more analytical than Old Norse, and have undergone modification from literary culture and foreign influence. Norwegian has sunk into little more than a Danish dialect.

b. Gothic is on every ground a language which we must regard with great interest and curiosity. It is the oldest representative of Low German, to which it stands in much the same relation as Sanskrit does to the other European languages. Its sole remaining documents—the fragments of a calendar, and of the version of the Bible by Bishop Ulphilas,* are older by three centuries than any

* Ulphilas is the Latin form of his Gothic name, Vulfila. He was a bishop of the Arian Goths, born 318, made bishop in 348, and died at Constantinople in 388. Instead of the old linear runic characters, he introduced an alphabet founded on the Greek. See Beisel *Ueb. das Leben des Ulfilas*, 1860. The reader who wishes for some conception of Gothic may obtain it from a little book, *Auswahl aus*



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other Teutonic literature. Unless we possessed this mutilated version, happily preserved in a single MS. of the fifth century, the celebrated Codex Argenteus at Upsala, it would be almost impossible to see the connection of such languages as German and English with the Aryan stem. For the Gothic language is absolutely dead—more so even than Greek and Latin, because it has left no direct descendants. Like the Lithuanian, it retained the dual, and it possessed a middle voice, which even Lithuanian has lost; it also retained the reduplication of the perfect,* and a fuller and less mutilated system of inflections than any other Teutonic dialect. It was mainly the study of Gothic which led Grimm to the discovery of his famous law, and which rendered possible that historical grammar of his native language which will long remain as a splendid memorial of his learning and patriotism.

c. German proper divided itself into low and high German; and low German again into Frisian and Saxon. From the Saxon was developed in one direction Anglo-Saxon and English, and in another Dutch. The only literary monument of the old Saxon is the Hêljand, a life of our Saviour drawn

*Ulfilas' goth. Bibelübersetz., mit einem Wörterb. u. s. w.*, von K. A. Kahn. Heidelberg, 1865—without going to larger and more expensive works like those of Löbe and Schulze. A new grammar by Leo Meyer has just appeared.

* E.g. *valda*, perf. *vaivald*; *haita*, perf. *haihait*; *skaida*, perf. *skaiskaid*, &c.

from the Gospels, and written in alliterative metre. It will be observed that the Frisian branch of Saxon is parallel to Anglo-Saxon, and in fact resembles English almost as closely as it resembles German. Every one knows the old rhyme,

> Bread, butter, and cheese,
> Is good English and good Friese.

It never was a literary language, and is now almost dead, except in the mouths of the sailors and the uneducated classes in Northern Germany, on the shores of the Baltic.

English, a language which has produced a literature equalled by few and surpassed by none, is of course the main glory of this branch of the Teutonic language. Modern German belongs to the high German branch, and had three epochs in its development, viz. Old High German, down to the eleventh century, Middle High German, down to Luther, and New High German,* dating from Luther's translation of the Bible, which at once enriched and ennobled the language, and rendered it permanent in its present form.† Certainly this Teutonic stem of the Aryan tree, bearing on two of its branches such 'bright consummate flowers' as English on the one hand and German on the other, may challenge

* For the distinguishing marks of the Old, Middle, and New High German see Schleicher, *Die Deutsche Sprache*, 95–108.

† Luther says that in his version he used no special dialect of German, but only the highest and best form of it: 'welcher nachfolgen alle Fürsten und Könige in Deutschland.'

comparison with the noblest and most fruitful scions of the noblest and most fruitful stock. India may bring her Vedas and her Mahabharata, and Persia her Zend Avesta and Shâh Nâmeh, and Greece her Homeric poems,—and Rome may more than supplement the whole mass of her narrow, haughty, and unoriginal literature by claiming the glory of the Divina Commedia, and the Lusiad, and the Poem of the Cid,—but can any or all of them vaunt any superiority over the Teuton, who developed among his various descendants languages so lovely and noble, so strong and flexible, so subtle and wise, so intense and musical,—languages so rich with all treasures of Poetry, Science, Philosophy, Eloquence, and History, as the languages of the Eddas and the Niebelungen, and of our early ballads,—the languages of Kant and Goethe and Schiller, of Shakspeare, of Milton, and of Wordsworth,—the languages carried by commercial enterprise from Zembla to Tierra del Fuego, —the languages which the thought of Germany, and the majesty of England, and the ebullient energy of America have elevated into the ruling languages of the political and intellectual world?

v. The Sclavonic* family, or, as some people prefer to call it, the Windic, may be very briefly dismissed.

* The word Slav is of uncertain derivation. Professor Senkovski derives it from the root *slov- chlov-* 'man' (Russian, cheloyäku; Polish, *ozlowiek = slovak*). Others derive it from *sru*, slu, Greek κλυ- in the sense of κλυτός, 'famous.'

The members of it, when they have defæcated their political existence of the Asiatic dregs of despotism and serfdom, are probably destined to play a very mighty part in the history of humanity. But at present they have barely emerged from a long-continued barbarism; they have developed no very important or original literature, nor can we even vouchsafe the name of history to the insignificant and bloodstained annals of their imperial autocrats.*

For our present purpose it will be sufficient merely to refer to the table for a sufficient indication of the Slavonic languages and dialects. All we need here mention is that the oldest monuments of the language are to be found in Old Bulgarian or Old Church Slavic of the eleventh century.†

vi. The divisions of Lettic may also be seen sufficiently in the table and map. Its most im-

* A considerable school of ethnologists and philologians would deny to the Russians *as a nation* the right to belong to the Slavonic stock. See especially a very elaborate work, *Peuples Aryas et Tourans*, par F. H. Duchiński (de Kiew). Paris, 1864. Madame de Staël called Moscow 'Rome *tartare*,' and M. Mérimée writes, 'Par une brillante journée d'hiver Moscou c'est Constantinople en pelisse, c'est l'Orient gelé.'—*Une année en Russie.*

† The reader may find ample information about the various Slavonic dialects in Max Müller's *Survey of Languages*, 67–84. The only ones which have any literary interest are the Polish and the Servian. (On the poems of a really remarkable Polish poet, Count Krasinski, Mr. Lytton (Owen Meredith) has founded his *Orval* and *Christmas Eve*: he has also written some beautiful versions of Servian songs.) Polabish is a dead dialect once spoken on the Elbe.

portant branch is the Lithuanian, which possesses indeed but little literature except certain *dainos*, or popular songs, but which, in consequence of its centuries of isolation, has preserved to an extraordinary extent all the living, and many, elsewhere extinct, elements of Aryan speech. It still retains, for instance, the dual number, and no less than seven out of the eight Sanskrit cases. The Old Prussian, which has been dead for two centuries, is only represented by the Catechism of Albert of Brandenburg. The Lettish, spoken in Courland and Livonia, is only a modernised form of Lithuanian.

III. The last to linger by the old cradle were the Aryans proper, who subsequently divided into Iranians and Hindoos.

vii. The name Iranian is derived from *arya*, and the oldest representatives of the language are the Old Persian and the Old Bactrian. The Old Persian is the language of many of the cuneiform inscriptions of the Achæmenid dynasty. The Old Bactrian or Zend is the language of the Avesta, the sacred writings of the Zoroastrian religion; Huzvâresch, or Pehlevi, is the language in which the commentaries and more recent versions of th e Avesta are written. The great Epic poem of Firdousi, the Shah Nameh, or Book of Kings, which, besides the Avesta, is the only very memorable work produced in this family, is in Parsi or Pazend. The modern Persian is a degenerate scion of it, greatly

impoverished in grammatical forms, and degraded by a large admixture of Arabic and other words.*

viii. The Indian Family, so named from their long sojourn on the upper Indus,† is the family whose language was Sanskrit, whose religious poems were the Vedas, and from the bosom of which arose the venerable and wide-spread religion of Buddhism, preached by the Hindoo prince, Sakya-Mouni. Though India was their latest conquest, to which they made their way along the southern spurs of the Himalayas, it is on them that the light of historical knowledge first dawns, and it is from the discovery of the dead language which they once spoke that its latest science, the science of Comparative Philology, has sprung. Of Sanskrit we have already spoken. It has been gradually decomposed into the modern dialects of India and Ceylon, and it has a mutilated and degraded descendant in the language of the Gypsies, which in grammar is Aryan, although its vocabulary is a sort of common sewer into which the argots of nearly every nation of Asia and Europe have been discharged.

Having thus glanced at the eight varieties of

* More or less connected with Persian are the Pushtu of Afghanistan, the language of Bokhara, of the Kurds, the Armenian, and the Ossetian. For further information respecting these languages see Max Müller, *Survey of Languages*, pp. 32–36.

† It is probable that the Aryan Hindoos did not begin to advance into the peninsula of India before B. C. 1000, and that they did not reach the Deccan (*dakshin* = South) before B. C. 450.

speech which compose the Aryan Unity, a careful study of the map and table which accompany this lecture will impress still more deeply on the mind the importance and interest of the facts which we have thus passed in review. Every day will add to their significance, because they reveal the changes which have taken place over vast areas of the world's surface, and the original affinities of the most active and civilised races of mankind. Even since this lecture was written, recent events, on which these considerations ought not to be without their bearing, have attracted the attention of the civilized world. We spoke but briefly of the great Slavonic race, because of its comparative unimportance when brought into contrast with the Hellenic, the Italic, or the Teutonic. Yet even since this lecture was written, the progress and development of that race have given rise to grave political questions, and have caused us a legitimate anxiety with respect to its future intentions. For in the case of this great Slavonic nation there has been, as it were, a regurgitation of the Aryan wave. Emigrating originally to the westward, they filled the immense regions which they had so long occupied, and are now flowing back again over the paths they traversed in their first departure. Persia has been long subjected to their influence: at this moment all Turkestan is practically theirs. Since Peter the Great, in 1772, took Derbent, on the Caspian, from

Persia, they have been constantly pushing their encroachments farther and farther towards the East.* So that, as you see, the two branches of our race who stayed longest in the mother country, and wandered from it least far—the Persians and the Hindoos—have both been subjugated by returning families of their western brethren. We of the Teutonic race, travelling in our commercial energy over half the globe, came to India by sea, and have forced it to acknowledge our dominion: the Slavonic race, flowing back in what Æschylus calls a κῦμα χερσαῖον, or dry-land wave, have overflowed Persia by land, and reached the borders of Affghanistan. Soon these two younger brothers—the Slavonian and the Teuton—the former Lord of the Iranian, the latter of the Hindoo, will gaze at each other face to face from opposite heights of the great Himalayan range. Shall we meet as brothers or as enemies? Shall our intercourse be the intercourse of mutual amity or of deadly warfare? † Let the knowledge of our past

* No book gives a more vivid impression of the growth of Russian influence in these directions than M. Arminius Vámbery's *Travels in Turkestan*.

† Mons. Duchiński's book, previously quoted, is a striking proof of the importance of race-considerations. After trying to prove that the Russians are in great measure Finns and Mongols, he quotes with approbation a remark of M. Reville: 'Le Kosaque, le Tartare, le Mongol—*voilà l'éternel ennemi de notre race.*'—*Peuples Aryas*, p. xv. M. Reville fully recognises the importance of the Aryan theory to the security and happiness of our Indian Empire: 'On prétend que déjà les Hindous les plus éclairés reconnaissent cette vérité qui met leur amour-propre à l'aise, et se montrent bien plus

history decide us in favour of pacific and beneficent counsels. And so, contemplating this great tidal march of Aryan emigration as it encircles the globe, let us see that it be for the cleansing and the blessing of the world. Then it shall be with us as though the Angel of the Nations had waved his hand, and calling to him the powers which guard the progress and happiness of mankind, had addressed their leader in the words of our great poet:

> 'Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast the South
> With strictest watch; these others wheel the North,
> Our circuit meets full West.'

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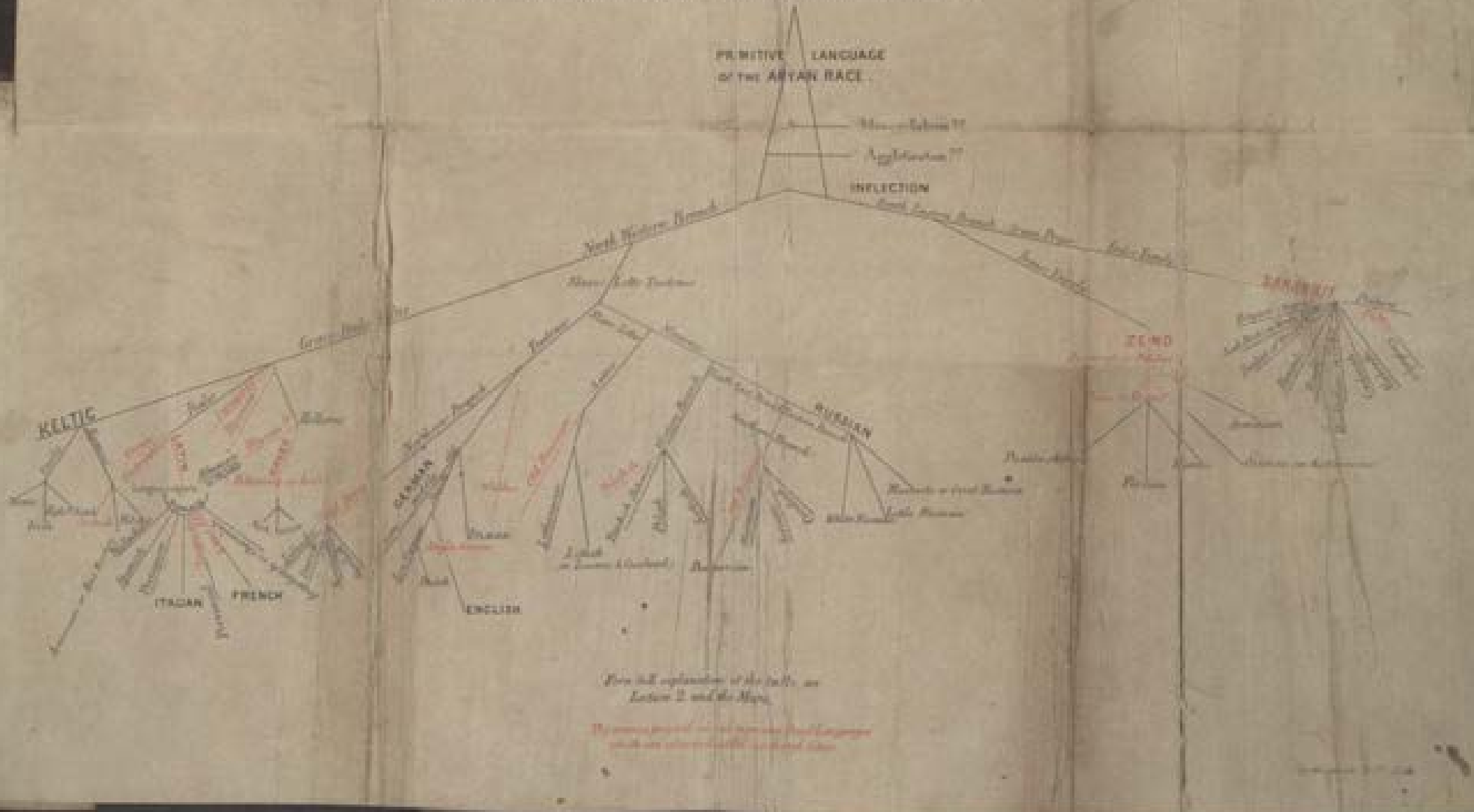
disposés qu'auparavant à faire cause commune *avec les Européens contre leurs anciens envahisseurs*.'—*Rev. des deux Mondes*, 1861, p. 727.

# GENERAL TABLE OF THE ARYAN OR INDO-EUROPEAN LANGUAGES.



## LECTURE III.

HAVING, then, in my two previous Lectures endeavoured to sketch the steps in the discovery of the great Aryan Unity, the remarkable insight which it gives us into early History, and the most important conclusions which it naturally suggests, I must now ask your attention to the only other great Family of highly-cultivated and inflectional languages, one which has been of hardly less importance than the Aryan in the world's development—I mean the Semitic; the family of which Arabic is the most polished and by far the most widely-disseminated, but of which Hebrew is the most important and interesting member. A glance at the map will show that the Semitic languages are confined to a much smaller area than those with which we have been dealing. The nations which speak them do not probably comprise more than 40,000,000 of the human race, as compared with some 400,000,000 of the Aryan nations.

The general unity of this Family of Languages—of which you see a table before you—is so obvious that it has been recognised for centuries. Even

St. Jerome classed them together as the Oriental languages. The first to apply to them the name Semitic * was Eichhorn. He did so because in that inestimable fragment of antique ethnography, the 10th chapter of Genesis, Shem is represented as the father of Elam, Assur, Lud, and Aram—who represent the inhabitants of Elymais, Assyria, Lydia, and Syria; and of Arphaxad, who has two grandsons, Eber, the ancestor of the Hebrews, and Joktan, the earliest ancestor of the Arabians.† The name Semitic involves, indeed, a multitude of hypotheses. It is suggested by the Bible, and yet can hardly be called Biblical, if Genesis x. be regarded as *historic* ethnography. The writer of that chapter in enumerating the nations of his own race, excludes the Phœnicians, who almost certainly were Semites, but who are there put down among the descendants of Ham: he excludes the Babylonians, whose claim to be Semites is strongly maintained; and includes the Assyrians, whose connection with the Babylonians was very close. If, however, Semitic be understood as a purely conventional term, representing geographically and roughly the central zone of Western Asia, it is not without its conveniences,

* I adopt the form Semitic rather than Shemitic, simply because it is more euphonious, and has acquired a greater currency.

† I call him their *earliest* ancestor, because the Arabians themselves draw a distinction between the Arab el-Aribeh, the pure and genuine Arabs, and the Arab el-Mustaaribeh, or descendants of Ishmael, whom they look upon as the representatives of a later stock.

although it will be seen that on the analogy of the term Indo-European we might call these languages the Syro-Arabian. At present they are only spoken in and near the Arabian peninsula and the neighbouring parts of Africa. In Europe they are represented solely by the Maltese, which is a mixture of Arabic and Italian,—by a certain infusion into that singularly mixed form of human speech, the Turkish,—and by a small number of words, chiefly compounded with the Arabic article *el*, which have been bequeathed by them to Spanish, or have accidentally infiltrated into other European languages. The accompanying table will represent clearly to the eye that there are three branches of the family: a *Southern* branch, the direct parent of Arabic and its dialects, of the dead language of the Himyaritic inscriptions, and of Abyssinian as spoken in Tigré and Gondar: a *Northern* or Aramaic branch which split into two, viz. a western division, to which belongs modern Syriac and its dialects, and an eastern division, to which are believed to have belonged the languages of Assyria and Babylon; and a *Central* branch of surpassing interest and importance, since in it are comprised three such dead languages as Hebrew, Phœnician, and Carthaginian.

* Such as elixir, alcove, algebra, alcohol, alchemy, &c.; also cotton, caraffe, magazine, admiral, coffee, saffron, camel, cipher, orange, zenith, nadir, &c.

Now at the top of the table you will see written the word Egyptian over a *dotted* line, which represents that the language so indicated is dead, and continued into a *firm* line, over which is written the word Coptic.* This is done in deference to the opinion of various scholars that the ancient Egyptian represents the most primitive form of Semitic speech, in which case of course the Coptic, which is its lineal representative, would also be regarded as a Semitic language. Now in the Bible *Mizraim*, the common name of Egypt, is made a son of *Ham*, not of *Shem*, and to this fact we should of course attach a very considerable importance in deciding *against* the Semitic origin of the Egyptians, were it not almost certain that these invaluable Biblical genealogies in Genesis x. are meant to point rather to great geographic zones than to direct ethnological affinities. The facts respecting the Egyptian language are these. While some of those who argue most strongly for its Semitic character admit that on the whole it differs as widely from Semitic as Semitic from Aryan, they yet prove that in the pronouns and in the manner of affixing them, in the numerals, in the assimilation of consonants, in the subordination and instability of the vowel, and in other general syntactical features, it presents a

* Ægypt is derived by some from *ἀλα κόπτος*. Copt is a corruption of the word Ægypti (as is also Gypsy, which rests on a false assumption).

Semitic aspect; on the other hand it is argued that, side by side with these Semitic elements are found Hamitic or Negritian elements of a wholly different character; that in roots (the majority of which are monosyllabic) it differs very widely from Semitic languages; that many of the grammatical resemblances reduce themselves to that vague general identity of form without which human language would not be human language at all; that in general character, no less than in physical formation, this dark race, whose very name of Chamite may indicate their swarthy complexion, differs widely from the fairer Semites. Whether or not Typhon was to the Egyptian mind a personification of all that they detested in that race, there is at any rate an obvious contrast between the complexions indicated by the name Chami on the one hand, and Edomite, Himyarite, Erythrean, and Phœnician on the other.* It is certain too, that, whether they stood to each other in the relation of conquerors or conquered, the Jews and the Egyptians regarded each other with cordial abhorrence.† The soberest conclusion seems to be to consider the question as still an open one, and for the present to exclude Egyptian from the

* Chämi = Αἰθίοψ = black; Edom and Himyer = red; Erythræan is from ἐρυθρος, and Phœnician from φοίνιξ. It is of course possible that the names alluded to the colours of the soils, and not to the complexion of the races which inhabited them.

† The 'Go ye not into Egypt' of Jeremiah (xlii. 20), was a prohibition wrung from centuries of evil experience.

dignity of being a kind of ante-historic Semitism. It must be classed with a separate branch of Hamitic languages, such as Berber and Touareg, which extend along the entire north of Africa, and which, while they were still in a condition of 'primordial fusibility,' i.e. while they were still plastic and impressible to a degree not possible at a more developed stage, were undoubtedly subjected to a period of powerful and continuous Semitic influences.

The next important question that meets us in looking at this table is the question whether the Babylonian and Assyrian languages, as known from some of the cuneiform inscriptions, were really Semitic or not. Here too I will content myself with a mere recapitulation of the elements which we possess for the decision. Turning first to the Bible we find that Nimrod, the son of Cush, and the founder of Babylon, is a son *not of Shem but of Ham*; and that although Asshur, the supposed Hero Eponymus of the Assyrians, *is* made a son of Shem, yet the conquest and colonisation of his land is again ascribed to Nimrod. We find also from Isaiah (xxxiii. 19),* and from the story of Rabshakeh in the Book of Kings (2 Kings xix. 21), that the language of Assyria was unintelligible to the Hebrews, and was even regarded by them as a stammering or ridiculous

* 'A people of a deeper speech than thou canst perceive, of a stammering (marg. ridiculous) tongue that thou canst not understand.'—Is. xxxiii. 19. There is some probability that Rab-shakeh was an apostate Jew.

speech, and that the deadliest enmity raged between these peoples. We must therefore believe the notion of the Jews themselves to have been that the *original* inhabitants of Assyria were of the same, and the original inhabitants of Babylon of a *different*, stock from themselves; and that the latter had at a very early period subdued or expelled the former. Turning to linguistic evidence, we find the acknowledged fact that the ancient names of Assyria and Babylonia are clearly Semitic. *Rehoboth*, the Assyrian city mentioned in Gen. x. 11, like the Greek Platæa, means 'streets.' *Gaugamela*, 'the camel's house,' where Alexander defeated Darius, *Zab*, the river of the wolf, Adramelech, Anammelech, Rabsaris, Rabshakeh, Belus, Belodan, are all obviously and confessedly Semitic words. To this it is objected that these may be merely Hebrew versions of the real Assyrian words, just as the river Zab was called by the Greeks Λύκος by changing the meaning into Greek;—or mere corruptions of the true names, just as Beersheba, the well of the oath, becomes in Arabic Beer el Seba, the well of the lion, or as the Greeks called butter *βούτυρον*, as though it came from *βοῦς* and *τύρον*, although it was a wholly different word, of Scythian origin.* Such conjectures,

* So the English soldiers always spoke of Surajah Dowlas, as Sir Roger Dowlas. The French sailors have corrupted the name of the island *Belopoulos* into *Belle Poule*. The Venetians metamorphosed Egripo into Negropont, &c. See *Origin of Language*, pp. 57-61. *Chapters on Language*, p. 198.

it must be admitted, are hardly probable. That the Babylonian and Assyrian contained strong Semitic *elements* may be regarded as settled by the labours of such scholars as Sir Henry Rawlinson, Dr. Hincks, M. Oppert, and others; but, on the other hand, M. Renan, who on the Semitic languages is a high authority, considers the evidence insufficient to prove that they actually belonged to the Semitic *family*, and he brings against that theory the objection that the Semites had an alphabet of their own; that this alphabet, with slight modifications, was common to every single member of the family; that remains which have been discovered show it to have been actually in use both in Assyria and Babylonia; and that, had the language of the inscriptions been really a Semitic language, it is inconceivable that the cuneiform characters would have been used in writing it. I cannot say that the objection seems to be *conclusive*; but it may, I think, be said with diffidence that the Babylonian and Assyrian were *mixed* languages, and that they cannot with any safety be placed in the acknowledged Semitic family without the note of interrogation I have ventured to place against them in the table as it stands. Perhaps the hypothesis of Renan, that the basis of the Assyro-Babylonian nationality was an Hamitic race, resembling that of Egypt, that this was succeeded by a large Semitic population, and that this in turn was finally dominated over by a small aristocracy of

Aryan warriors and statesmen, is the one which reconciles the greatest number of the difficulties with which the whole question is confessedly surrounded.

Of the Arabian or southern branch I do not purpose to speak, although the Arabs are perhaps the most original of the Semitic nations. Their influence on the mind of Europe was at one time immense, and for mercantile purposes the modern Arabic is still very widely disseminated. Nor will it be necessary to do more than allude to the two lines which here radiate from this branch, and which represent African offshoots of the Semitic languages. For these the name *sub-Semitic*, rather than Semitic, has been proposed. The Ethiopic is now a dead language, and its chief monument, as in the case of Gothic, Cornish, Old Bulgarian, and other languages, is a version of the Bible. The *Gheez*, which is a language of Tigré, in the north-east of Abyssinia, and which is the sacred and literary language of the country, is its modern descendant and representative. But for general purposes the Gheez has been ousted by the *Amharic*, an ancient idiom parallel to the Gheez, but not derived from it, and more barbarous in its general character. It is believed to be the representative of the dead language of south-western Arabia, which is only preserved in the Himyaritic inscriptions. Passing over these two branches with this cursory notice, I may just allude to the Syriac,

here indicated as the western division of the Aramaic branch. It is usually called Syro-Chaldee, but the name Chaldee is so vague and misleading that I have purposely excluded it. One point of imperishable interest, however, about this language I must mention. The intense affection of St. Mark, or perhaps we should say rather of St. Peter, who directed him, has in several instances preserved for us the actual words and syllables spoken on certain memorable occasions by our blessed Lord, and from them we see that this dialect was still spoken at the dawn of the Christian era throughout the land

> Over whose acres walked those blessed feet
> Which eighteen hundred years ago were nailed
> For our salvation to the bloody cross.

'*Epphatha*,' '*Talitha cumi*,' '*Eloi, eloi, lama sabachthani*,' all belong to that Syriac dialect which prevailed in Palestine since the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon, and thus came to be ennobled by the utterances of Him who 'spake as never man spake.'*

Passing to the central division, we naturally take Hebrew for its most characteristic type. Now Hebrew, although like other Semitic languages it is inflectional, yet even from this grammatical point of

* A single verse of Jeremiah, and parts of Ezra and Daniel are in Syriac, as also are the Targums and the Talmud. The Syriac version of the Bible, called the Peshito, dates from the second century. Syriac was almost crushed out of existence by Arabic in the tenth century, but it still lingers among a few Nestorian sects.

view differs entirely from any and every language of the Aryan family. Linguistic evidence proves that the Indo-European race sprang from Bactriana. Hebrew tradition, supported by a multitude of concurrent probabilities, points to the almost conterminous regions of Armenia as the cradle of the Semite. And yet Aryan and Semitic speech are the products of organisations wholly different, both artistically and intellectually; their simple sounds, their roots, their syllabic constitution, the entire laws of their composition, are radically diverse. To say nothing of differences in the pronouns and numerals, and the utter illusoriness of the accidental resemblances in the unborrowed words which have been supposed to indicate an original identity, the root of Aryan verbs is all but invariably monosyllabic, consisting of a consonant followed by a vowel, as in da 'give,' or 'sta,' stand; but the root of the Semitic verb is always triliteral, or rather triconsonantic, and therefore necessarily disyllabic, *i.e.* instead of being, as in Aryan, an *open* syllable, it is always *close* (as in *qtl*, 'to kill;' *dbr* 'to speak'; *ktb*, 'to write'), and in its most elementary form or root consists of two consonants of different organs, such as *Kaph*; of which in the perfect the second letter is often reduplicated, as in *Rabab*. Then, again, whereas in Aryan vocabularies *nine-tenths* of the words are compounds, consisting of verbs with prefixes, or their direct derivatives, in Semitic, on the other

hand, there is not such a thing as a compound verb* at all. In every Aryan language there are *thousands* of verbs compounded with a preposition; in Semitic, not a single instance of such a phenomenon occurs. Nor is this all, for not only are the formative words different, but also, which is more characteristic, the mode of attachment is different. In Aryan, if R represent the root and $\rho$ the inflection, the words are all according to the formula R$\rho$, whereas in Semitic they are generally $\rho$R, or $\rho$R$\rho$.† In Aryan the determinant precedes the thing determined; we say, for instance, river-horse, not horse-river,‡ sea-captain, not captain-sea; in Semitic, on the other hand, such compounds as these are chiefly proper names, and in them, by the very reverse process, the thing determined precedes the determinant; e.g. Samuel means 'asked-God,' but the corresponding word Theætetus, by which Josephus renders it, means 'God-asked'; Beth-*Shemesh* becomes in its Greek form *Heliopolis*, or 'Sun-city'; we say Newtown, or Neapolis,

* 'Quin Hebræi tantum compositiones illas refugiunt, ut malint metaphorâ abuti quam compositionem introducere.'—Bacon, *De Augmentis Scientiarum*.

† See Max Müller, *Stratification of Language*, p. 34. He adopts an ingenious notation, suggested, I believe, by Prof. Schleicher, *Deutsche Sprache*, p. 23. Take for instance the root *lmd*, 'he learnt,' and compare *elmôd*, 'I will learn,' *tilmôd*, 'thou wilt learn,' &c., with *discam*, *discas*, &c.; or compare *tith*lammedoo, 'you will teach yourselves,' with διδάξεσθε.

‡ 'Hippopotamos' is a bad late word of Strabo's; Herodotus and Aristotle use 'ἵππος ποτάμιος.' See Chavée, *Les Langues et les Races*, p. 56, to which I am here indebted for several facts.

they, as in the name Carthage, said Town-new; we say Fried*rich*, they say Ab-*Salom*; *-son* is with us a suffix, *Ben-* is with them a prefix. Rich, beautiful, and strikingly simple as was this Aryan procedure, the Semitic mind never attained to it. Given, for instance, *any* root, the Aryan languages, and particularly some of them—as Sanskrit, Greek, and Russian—can make an immense number of words out of it, by affix upon affix, derivative upon derivative. Given, for instance, such a root as the Sanskrit *stri*, 'to scatter,' and the genius of Aryan speech can, without an effort, fling his immense aërial arch from earth to heaven, and give us indifferently the *star* that scatters its light in space or the *straw* which is littered on the ground; or, given the root *mlag*, and we get at once and indifferently either the *galaxy* white with the glory of confluent suns, or the *lettuce* with its milky juice. Given such a word as *true*, and we are spontaneously furnished with *true*, *truth*, *truthful*, *truthfully*, *untruthfully*; given the root *voc*, and one gets at once, besides hundreds of other words, *voice*, *vocation*, *revoke*, *vocable*, *revocable*, *irrevocable*, *irrevocability*; given in Russian the words *bez-boza*, 'without God,' and we get at once *bezboznik*, atheist; *bezboznichat*, atheism; *bezboznichestvo*, the condition of being an atheist; *bezboznichestvocat*, to be in the condition of being an atheist; and so on. But this eminently fertile process of word-formation

is to the Semitic languages unknown. Once more, in the Aryan languages the *nuances* of words are distinguished by external additions, by suffixes and inflections; but in Hebrew, although there are inflections, the change of meaning is far more extensively and characteristically effected by internal modification. Thus in Greek, γράμμα is a writing γραφεύς, a writer, ἔγραψε, he wrote; whereas in Hebrew, SeePheR is a book, SoPHeeR is a writer, and SâPHaR, he wrote. Again, in Greek βασιλεὺς is a king, and ἐβασίλευσε, he reigned; but in Hebrew MeLeK is a king, and the same word, with other vowels, MâLaK, he reigned. Thus it is as if in Hebrew the triliteral consonants—which were the only things which appeared in writing at all, the vowels being left absolutely unrepresented—were things too sacred to touch; as though, had they been touched, the whole meaning and fabric of language would have crumbled away; whereas, in the very earliest Aryan period, the consonants are interfered with and obliterated by all kinds of euphonic principles, so that the laws of *sandhi*, or contact—i.e. the various assimilations and dissimilations which consonants undergo under various circumstances—are among the earliest and most intricate parts of Sanskrit grammar. Thus, as Prof. Monier Williams observes, if 'Rara avis in terris' were Sanskrit, it would require to be written as follows, in one word, *Raráviriusterrih*. Perhaps the method

of varying the meaning in the Semitic languages by internal modification of the vowels, leaving the consonants untouched, is the most singular and unique peculiarity about them. Such variations as in *sing*, *sang*, *song*, are simply due, in the Aryan languages, not to a primitive mechanism, but to an uncommon euphonic accident; but in Hebrew they are the rule, not the exception, and they look like a wholly new linguistic conception, which was the discovery of this family alone.*

It is deeply interesting to pursue the contrast of the Aryan and Semitic languages—or, let us say, of two such representatives of them as Greek and Hebrew. The metaphysical subtlety of Greek, its rich variety, its delicate capacity for reflecting the minutest shades of difference in meaning, the extraordinary wealth of its inflections, the softness and music of the language, its lightness, gaiety, voluptuousness, its extraordinary flexibility and precision as a well-understood conventional instrument of human expression, its genial lyric playfulness, the oceanic roll of its oratory, and the sonorous lilt of its epic verse, all contrast strangely and forcibly with the grave unbending stateliness of the Hebrew,

* Grimm had considered them due to some immediate inexplicable faculty of language; but Bopp, as he had already put to flight the mystical phantasms of Schlegel, showed that in the Aryan languages at any rate these vowel-modifications often had no influence on the sense, and were simply due to the tonic accent and the laws of euphony. See Bréal's ed. of Bopp's *Comp. Gram.* I. xxxvi.

its absence of syntax, its inflexible stiffness, its parsimony of construction, its gutturals and sibilants, its utter vagueness and mistiness, its almost penurious absence of modal and temporal distinctions. One would say that Greek is liquid, and Hebrew metallic; or that Greek is a coloured sun-picture, reproducing with the minute fidelity of Nature herself every shadow on the earth and every ripple on the sea, while Hebrew is a broad, rough, unshaded sketch, in the sweeping strokes of a Michael-Angelo or a Tintoretto. To realise the enormous difference between the two languages, it is sufficient to compare their verbs alone. Greek, with the 1,200 inflections of a perfect verb, can and does express an immense variety of temporal and modal conceptions, so that it is impossible to read a page of Sophocles or Thucydides without detecting, in the expressive precision of the tenses, every delicate and almost imperceptible play of feeling in the writer's mind, which even in English we slur over into the one prevalent aorist; but Hebrew does not so much as possess an aorist, or a pluperfect, or even a present, but contents itself with a single vague imperfect and a single vague future. It seems to me that the fundamental distinction between the two languages lay in this; the Greek, with boundless opportunity for style, handled his language as merely an *instrument*, while the Hebrew, regarding his as of Divine origin, could not in any way look

upon it as a thing *capable* of conventional modification,* and hence stuck as closely as he could to obvious onomatopœias and confessed pictorial metaphors. In short, he never got to the idealisation, or even the individuation, of words; afraid to launch forth, as the Aryan did, into the open sea of language, he never ventured to slip anchor from that narrow coast of it where the sound and the sense, the impression and the idea, are in sight of each other. As for onomatopœias, not only does Hebrew abound in them, but his language itself is one immense echo of natural sounds and primitive sensations. 'When,' says M. Vinet, 'you hear the vast word *haschâmaim*, which names the heavens, unfold itself like a vast pavilion, your intelligence—before knowing what the word signifies—expects something magnificent; no mean object could have been named thus; it is better than an onomatopœia, although it is not one.' And then as to metaphors, we know that metaphors are the very substance of language, the wheels and wings by which language began to move and soar; but then, happily for us, happily for our power of abstract thought, the sense of their *being* metaphors is not habitually present to us as a confusing influence when we use them. We speak of *humility* without any reference

* 'Quinetiam verbis tam paucis et minime commixtis utuntur, ut plane ex linguâ ipsâ quis perspiciat, *gentem fuisse illam Nazaream a reliquis gentibus separatam.*'—Bacon, *De Augm. Scient.* vi.

to *humus*, the ground; of *caprice*, without recalling the friskings of a kid; of *jovial*, with no connotation of Pagan deities or astrological planets; of *influence*, without being reminded of the circle which ripples on a stream. But a Hebrew would have regarded these words (*apart from* their metaphorical origin) as mere 'arbitrary, opaque, uninteresting conventionalisms.' He seemed ill at ease in realising a conception unless he could paint it in words confessedly and distinctly picturesque; it was no mere poetical ornament with him when he described a bullock to add that it had horns and hoofs; patience with him was a long sigh, impatience a quick gasp; or patience was length of nose, and irritability was shortness of nose; pardon was expressed by covering, hiding, effacing. In the Book of Job, says Renan, God puts sins in a sack, seals it, and flings it behind his back—all which means to forget. People not only speak, but open their mouths and speak; not only answer, but answer and say; not only get angry, but their visage is inflamed; not only sorrowful, but their visage falls;* do not merely go back, but rise up and return to the place whence they came forth; and the widow of Tekoah is not only a widow, but thinks it necessary to tell David that she is 'a widow woman and her husband is dead.' When, in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Pistol uses

* Compare Ex. xxxii. 15: 'The tables were written *on both their sides; on the one side and on the other were they written.*'

the expression 'He hears with his ears,' Sir Hugh Evans indignantly exclaims, 'The tevil and his tam! What phrase is this, "He hears with ear?" Why, it is affectations.' But, in point of fact, so far from being 'affectations,' it marks the pictorial redundancy of the earliest stages of language. The Semitic languages are in a much more *primitive* state than the Aryan, and all these peculiarities might be amply illustrated from other undeveloped languages. To give but one instance—the King of Bokhara informed Dr. Wolff that he had put to death poor Lieut. Connolly because 'he had had a long nose,' by which he simply meant in an expressive manner to imply that he was irritable or proud. Such metaphors and pleonasms arise from an instinctive desire to make everything even superfluously clear to the dimmest imagination and the least developed intelligence. The mighty line of Dante has often been admired, in which he tells us how in his anguish 'he fell as a dead body falls;'* yet how much less impressive is it than the solemnly intense pathos of that leisurely expression in the Book of Samuel, which tells us how the discrowned king in the witch's cave, his blood suddenly curdled by the prophecy of doom, 'fell straightway all along on the

* Mentre che l' uno spirto questo disse,
L' altro piangeva sì, che di pietade
Io venni men così com' io morisse;
E caddi, come corpo morto cade.—*Infern.* v. 142.

earth'—or, as the margin expresses it, '*made haste and fell with the fulness of his stature.*'

As a natural consequence of the characteristics I have described, the Hebrew language is indeed adapted to the most splendid and Sibylline utterances of prophecy and poetry—being what Milton in one of his pregnant utterances said that all poetry ought to be, 'simple, sensuous, passionate'—but in *prose* can hardly be said to admit the possibility of a style. I have already incidentally mentioned that Hebrew abounds in plays on words—like 'thohoo vabhohoo,' 'formless and void,' in the very second verse of Genesis—which in Aryan languages are almost confined to poetry, and *there* as a rare and questionable prettiness; but in Arabic, even at the culminating point of their literary activity, all the style there is consists of this and nothing else; the very ornament and imagery which the Arab regards as the jewels of the Koran are exactly those which we should regard as childish and fantastic. Here, for instance, is a passage on Death imitated from the sermon of an Arab preacher:—'When the sad hour shall *arrive*, what pious work will *survive*? When in the tomb you shall *repose*, what will you *oppose* to the questions that He then will *propose*? When God shall *plead*, who will *aid*?' &c.* This is all very well for proverbs and nursery rhymes, but imagine an entire history, like that, for instance,

* S. Munk, *Cours de langues hébraïques, Leç. d'ouvert.* 1865.

of Timour by Ibn-Arabscha, written partly with those perpetual assonances, and partly with a gorgeous luxury of imaginative ornament, and you will see that in a Semitic language a Thucydides or a Froude were as little possible as an Aristotle or a Kant.

Yet while we dwell on these intellectual deficiencies, while we admit that there was in the Semite but little of that science,* or philosophy, or courageous love of truth which are the glory of the Aryan,—while we acknowledge him to have been utterly deficient in the spirit of liberty which solved the problem of rendering individual development compatible with imperial and military organisation,—while we point out the onesidedness of his intellect, the sameness of his passions, the monotony of his history, the uniformity of his literature, the deficiency in him of the social instincts and of large humanitarian conceptions, the religious absorption which deadened in him all interest for science,† and the iconoclastic zeal which destroyed for him the

* We talk of Arabic science, and think of Avicenna and Averroes, &c. But the so-called science of the Arabs in the eleventh and twelfth centuries was merely a second-hand reflection of Greek thoughts, often both mistranslated and misexplained, to which, after all, the Arabic mind formed a very distorting medium: and the greatest names of the so-called Arabic philosophy are not the names of Semites at all, but of Persians and Spaniards writing in Arabic. A page of Roger Bacon contains, says M. Renan, more of the true spirit of science than all the traditional and second-hand science of a nation which found far truer expression in Ecclesiastes than in Aristotle. *Disc. d'ouvert.* p. 18.

† Job xxxvi. 25, 26; Eccles. i. 17, 18; xii. 12.

possibility of art—let us never forget the truly immeasurable work which he effected for the world. The very intensity and subjectivity of his religious conceptions were his *weakness* no less than his strength. They were his weakness, because a noble and fertile spirit of inquiry is impossible for one whose capacity of wonder is swallowed up in his awe for the Infinite and the Unseen, for whom every event is Kismet or Destiny—whose sufficient expression of astonishment is, 'Allah is great,' and whose ready solution of every inquiry is, 'Allah knows.'* No philosophic conception of great demiurgic laws, and no modification or adaptation of those laws to human purposes, was possible to a nation which regarded everything as the direct, immediate, unconditioned exercise of divine power, either by God Himself, or by individual angels or demons who stood ready to effect his purpose. 'When a bull is angry the devil leaps up between his horns,' wrote one of the Rabbis, and the same conception of miraculous intervention and personal agencies exhausts their entire philosophy of the universe, and the events which take place in it. Mr. Newman has somewhere said that the result

* 'L'islam est le dédain de la science, la suppression de la société civile; c'est l'épouvantable simplicité de l'esprit sémitique, rétrécissant le cerveau humain, le fermant à toute idée délicate, à tout sentiment fin, à toute recherche rationelle, *pour le mettre en face d'une éternelle tautologie: Dieu est Dieu.*'—Renan, *Disc. de l'ouvert. au Coll. de France*, p. 28.

of what is called Evangelical teaching upon his mind, was to intensify in him the conviction that the only two realities—the only two entities whose existence he could entirely realise—were himself and God. No expression could be chosen which more accurately describes the natural feelings of a Hebrew, or which could more simply indicate the tendency of his literature. Yet, as a direct consequence of this, although the Hebrew is the only member of his race who has handed down to posterity a permanent literature, and although his race has been intrusted with but one memorable work for mankind, yet that literature is of absolutely priceless value, and that work is the most infinite of all in its bearings, for the literature is the Bible, and the work is the dissemination of a belief in the ONE TRUE GOD. If there be a meagre sterility in the Hebrew's words, there is an infinitude in their power. If he evoked his awful music from a monochord, it was yet a sublimer chord, and one of more mysterious efficacy, than any of those whose blended music was heard in the seven-stringed harp which the Aryan played. The very subjectivity of his emotions, the introspective egotism of his whole spiritual constitution, led him in his deep meditations to educate for ever the conscience of mankind, and drove him forth at one period with fanatic proselytism, to spread among races, in all other respects his superiors, his sublime faith in the

Unity of God.* Free from the enormous confusions and complications of unaided Aryan thought, there have been but three religions which looked upward consciously and solely to the one true God. Those three religions were Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and those three religions (which are at this moment well-nigh the sole religions of the civilised world) sprang from three Semitic centres, which are separated from each other but by a few days' journey. The Hebraic Semite was, what he so intensely felt himself to be, a member of a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people. 'Greece,' says Thomas de Quincey, 'was, in fact, *too* ebullient with intellectual activity—an activity too palæstric and purely human—so that the opposite pole of the mind, which points to the mysterious and the spiritual, was, in the agile Greek—too intensely a child of the earth—starved and palsied; while in the Hebrew, dull and inert intellectually, but in his spiritual organs awake and sublime, the case was entirely reversed. Yet, after all, the result was immeasurably in favour of the Hebrew. Speaking in the deep sincerities of the solitary and musing heart, which

* 'La marche de l'humanité se fait par la lutte des tendances contraires, par une sorte de polarisation en vertu de laquelle chaque idée a ici-bas ses représentants exclusifs. C'est dans l'ensemble que s'harmonisent toutes les contradictions, et que la paix suprême résulte du choc des éléments en apparence ennemis.'—Renan, *Disc. d'ouvert. au Collège de France*, p. 14.

refuses to be duped by the mere whistling of names, the Greek *laudatur et alget*—he has won the admiration of the human race, he is numbered among the chief brilliancies of earth, but on the deeper and more abiding nature of man he has no hold. He will perish when any deluge of calamity overtakes the libraries of our planet, or if any great revolution of thought remoulds them, and will be remembered only as a generation of flowers is remembered, with the same tenderness of feeling, and with the same pathetic sense of natural predestination to evanescence. . . . Whereas the Hebrew, by introducing himself to the secret places of the human heart, and sitting there as incubator over the awful germs of the spiritualities that connect man with the unseen worlds, has perpetuated himself as a power in the human system: he is co-enduring with man's race, and careless of all revolutions in literature or in the composition of society.' The Aryans believed in the secular Avatar of their gods; far more real, far more enduring in its effects over the remotest generations, was the Avatar of Hebrew Prophecy.

Nor must we forget the extreme probability of our having owed to the Semitic race another most memorable gift—the gift of an alphabet, the gift of those ingenious symbols which can alone give perpetuity and unlimited extension to human utterances. The modern alphabets of all civilised

nations have come from Greek, and the Greeks themselves admitted that they had borrowed their alphabet from the Phœnicians. Cadmus, the name of the mythic introducer of writing into Greece, was represented as a Phœnician, and, in fact, his very name is but a Hebrew word, meaning either 'the ancient' or 'the East.'* I will not here digress into the interesting question as to the origin of writing, or as to the honour of its invention; but even if the Egyptians are entitled to the credit of the conception by virtue of the hieratic and demotic developments of their hieroglyphic system, the Phœnicians were certainly among the earliest to perfect it, and the sole nation who made it widely known. Their own literature has entirely perished, but they bequeathed to us an inheritance by which alone all other literature would be either possible or permanent. Nor is that all; for to the same remarkable people we owe some of the earliest enterprises of colonisation, and their adventurous barks, engaged in an active commerce, had carried them as far north as the British Isles, and as far west as the Sargasso Sea. Now, if the Phœnicians were indeed pure Semites, they form a most singular

* קֶדֶם to which the Greeks have merely affixed the termination of the nominative. But for these 'Cadmi nigellæ filiæ,' as Ausonius calls the Greek alphabet, we might still have been floundering in hieroglyphics. קֶדֶם is 'East,' in Gen. iii. 24; 'ancient' in Deut. xxxiii. 15; 2 Kings xix. 25; 'Cadmus' was the personification of the East, as 'Europa' of the West.

exception to the general peculiarities of their race. Little of what we have said respecting the Semitic race in general, applies to them. Unlike their national kindred, the Phœnicians were energetic, they were enterprising, they were artistic, they were grossly immoral, they were freely polytheistic. In short, they were almost everything which the other Semites were not, and scarcely anything that the other Semites were. If they were a pure race, they would go far (as do the Mexicans in America) to shake to its very foundations the conception of ineradicable race-distinctions which have long prevailed among so many ethnologists. The arguments against their being Semites is in part derived from the fact that the tenth chapter of Genesis classes them among the children of Ham. The supposition that this was a calumny of national hatred is, says Professor Munk, 'a very convenient style of criticism, which emanates rather from a certain coquetry of scepticism, than from any desire to seek and know the truth.' But in spite of this severe *dictum*, it must be admitted that, whatever may be the difficulties in the way of believing the Phœnicians to have been Semites, the difficulties on the other side are far more overwhelming. Professor Munk indeed, accepting a tradition of Herodotus, believes that the Phœnicians were an immigrating, victorious Hamitic race, who adopted the Semitic dialect of the Rephaim and other aborigines

whom they conquered, and he thinks that Hamitic *débris** can still be discovered in the few monuments of their language. But can anything be more supremely improbable than the suggestion that such a people as the Phœnicians should have adopted their language from the defeated remnant of a race so brutal as the Palestinian aborigines—a race which, we may remark in passing, are not *certainly* known to have been Semites at all. One thing, however, is admitted on all hands, and that is that the Phœnician language, even if it had some slight extraneous admixtures, was not only Semitic, but bore the closest possible resemblance to the Hebrew. The names of their two chief towns, Tyre and Sidon, are both Hebrew, the former meaning 'rock,' the latter 'fishery.' The relics of their language on coins and inscriptions are very few, the most important being the inscription on the tomb of Eschmoun-Ezer, King of Sidon, which is now in the Louvre, and the Phœnician inscription of Marseilles. But, on the other hand, we have several fragments of the language of the Carthaginians, who were their direct colonists, Dido, the legendary founder of Carthage, being, in all probability, a contemporary of the Phœnician princess Jezebel. We know that Carthage itself

* He instances the pronoun *anokhi*, 'I,' found in no other Semitic language, except the Hebrew אָנֹכִי, אָנֹכִי. It is also found in Egyptian, v. Gesen. *Thes.* i. 126, s. v.

means in Hebrew, 'Newtown;' that Byrsa, its citadel, is the Hebrew bozra, a fortress; that *bal* in such names as Hasdrubal and Hannibal is simply Baal; that Barca, the family name of Hannibal, is the same as barak, 'lightning;' that 'suffetes,' which Livy tells us was the name of the Carthaginian magistrates, is the Hebrew 'shophetim,' or judges; that Lilybæum, the name they gave to the western angle of Sicily, means 'towards Libya,' *li* being simply the Hebrew preposition. Finally, not to dwell on other proofs, Plautus wrote a play called *Pœnulus*, 'the Little Carthaginian,' and in that play a Punic scene is introduced, which, so far as it has been yet deciphered, is most distinctly Hebraic in its character. St. Augustine, who was himself a Carthaginian, says that Hebrew and Carthaginian differed but little. Since, then, the Phœnicians spoke a Semitic language, we must almost necessarily conclude that they were themselves partially Semites. Perhaps the true solution of the difficulties which meet us in finding them possessed of a civilisation wholly unlike that of the other people who spoke their language, lies in the fact indicated in the book of Genesis by the fraternal relation of Ham to Shem: perhaps, in fact, we may assume that there was at an early period a close intercourse and rapid interchange of relations between the descendants of Ham and those of Shem, and that, in consequence of this intercourse, the Hamites sometimes adopted

the *language* of the Semites, while they retained tendencies and institutions of a wholly different character.

The relations between the Aryan and the Semitic race have been almost entirely hostile, from the day when Alexander conquered Phœnicia and subjugated Judæa, down to the other day when Lord Napier of Magdala crushed in a single campaign the power of Abyssinia. The Aryan race has almost invariably triumphed in the contest. The Semites were indeed victorious when Judas Maccabeus broke the yoke of Antiochus Epiphanes; and when Hannibal shattered the Roman armies at Cannæ and Thrasimene; and when the Jews defeated Cestius at Beth-horon; and when at Kadesia the general of Omar won the standard of Persia;* and when, again, advancing by Gibraltar, which still bears his name, the Moorish chieftain Tarik scattered at Xeres the forces of Roderic. But, on the other hand, the Semites were utterly routed by Scipio at Zama, and by Titus when the Roman eagles gathered round the dying carcass of Judea; and when, in the reign of Adrian, 580,000 followers of the false Messiah, Barchochebas, fell by fire, famine, and the sword; and when, in 732 A.D., in seven days of battle and massacre on the plains of

* Stiff as it was with jewels, it was the apron of the patriotic blacksmith Gavah.

† Djebel al Tarik.

Tours, Charles Martel gave that final and decisive rout to their forces, but for which, as Gibbon observes, 'perhaps the interpretation of the Koran would now be taught in the schools of Oxford, and her pulpits might demonstrate to a circumcised people the sanctity and truth of the revelation of Mahomet.' Since that day the entire fortunes and destinies of the Semitic race have declined. The glories of Islam, the direct result of their religious enthusiasm, were but the dying flash in the embers of its vitality. The memorials of its splendour are recorded in undecipherable inscriptions in the desert or on mountain-rocks, or lie buried amid the ruins of Palestine, the fisher-tents of Sidon, the broken columns of Carthage, and the mounds of Kouyunjik; nor does there live for it any hope of future history save in the cherished and sacred convictions of a scattered people that 'the Lord will yet build up Jerusalem, and gather together the outcasts of Judah.'

But still this race did not begin to decline and disappear from the field of history until its work was done. 'Humanity may advance solely over the wrecks of past ages and the ruins of former people, but it advances still.' Tribes and nations disappear, but it is only to make way for others who have higher problems still to solve. The character of the Semitic race has always been its 'inveterate isolation.' Even in the days of their dawning glory the Semites did but occupy a small parallelogram of Asia,

about 1,600 miles long, and 800 broad, chiefly in its two western peninsulas, and not more than one-thirteenth part of its whole extent. They have rarely left these narrow boundaries. Their colonies were few, and in few instances have they been permanent; their conquests were only due to a tumultuous and vivid fanaticism, and in no instance have they left very abiding traces. Not to Shem, the ancestor of the Jews, but to Japhet, the ancestor of the Aryans, was given the prophecy of enlargement, and in all ages Japhet has dwelt in the tents of Shem. If it was written in the books of destiny that the sons of Ham were to be slaves, and the sons of Shem to be prophets, it was written also that the sons of Japhet were to be kings.

And yet, before the children of Arabia had forgotten the example of that fiery valour which inspired Khaled, 'the sword of God,' they had carried their victorious religion through the fairest regions of the globe, and so rescued them from the worst curses of a degraded Polytheism. Before Judaism disappeared there had been intrusted to men born in her traditions that divine revelation which was destined to regenerate the world. The Semite has sunk indeed into decrepitude, but not until he had left to the Aryan the inheritance of his best wealth. The Aryan, more objective in his conceptions, less concentrated in his personality, did not learn unaided to disentangle his religious conceptions from his natural impressions—

> The traveller slaked
> His thirst from fount and gushing rill, and thanked
> The Naiad. Sunbeams upon distant hills
> Gliding apace with shadows in their train
> Might with small help from fancy be transformed
> Into fleet Oreads sporting visibly.
> The Zephyrs fanning, as they passed, their wings
> Lack'd not for love fair objects whom they wooed
> With gentle whisper.

In short, the religion of the Aryan was but a personification of external influences, and his mythology a metaphorical description of the ravages of night and winter, the freshness of the dewdrops, or the glory of the dawn. The Semite, more subjective, more individual, taught him to separate himself more clearly from the Universe, to gain a loftier conception of the Deity, to look through Nature up to Nature's God. The knowledge of One God was the living oracle of Semitism; an oracle which it preserved, but was at once powerless and unwilling to communicate to the world. It received, it treasured;—to disseminate was beyond its power. But when God revealed himself in His Son the revelation was no longer destined for a separate nation. When the Semitic race bequeathed its sceptre to the Gentile world, it bequeathed with that sceptre the heritage of a new religion. And it was this new religion which enkindled the force and genius of the hitherto dormant members of the Aryan Family. This it was which flushed with fresh vigour the veins of the dying Roman Empire.

This it was that raised the Teutons from a race of lazy barbarians into leaders in the world's intellectual advance. This it was that transformed the cruel and frantic Viking into the chivalrous and noble Norman. This it was which even now is daily lifting the Slavonian from polygamy, isolation, and serfdom. This it was that gave all which is noblest and most distinctive to the names of France, and England, and Italy, and Spain. Yes; the Aryan has well learnt the deepest lesson which the Semite had to teach, and with that lesson it seems the clear destiny of Providence that he should advance farther and farther to the civilisation, the enlightenment, in one word, the evangelisation of the whole habitable globe.

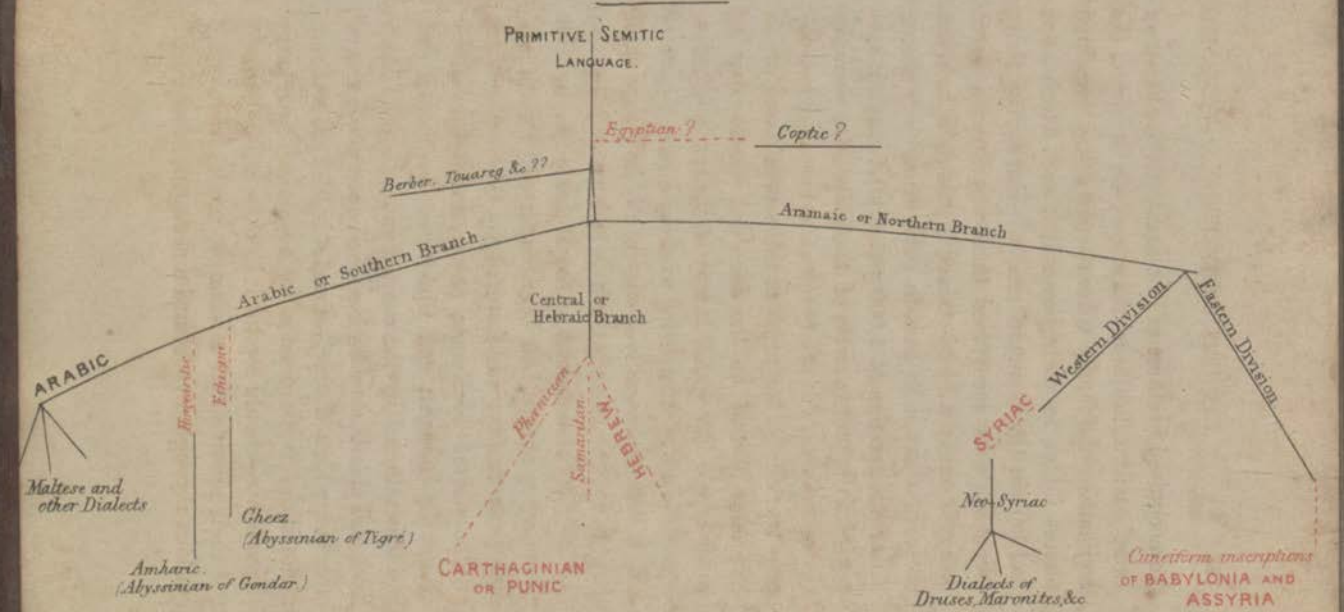
Let me, before I conclude this Lecture, once more very briefly recapitulate some of the leading historical conclusions and thoughts which are the recent gift of the Science of Philology to the knowledge and the purposes of mankind.

Not far from each other—the one in the regions of Armenia, the other along the great Oxus valley—appeared in the dimmest dawn of commencing human development two races, fairer in complexion, stronger and more beautifully organized in physical constitution, and with spirits incomparably more finely touched to fine issues than any other races which the world had to that time seen. At periods varying from 3,000 to 2,000 years before our era, a

vast division took place in the Aryan race, and whole tribes, destined hereafter to be the fathers of mighty nations, streamed away victoriously in successive waves, first towards the north and west, and later towards the east and south. They became subjected to different laws,—the western tribes advancing farthest in material and intellectual prosperity, the eastern feeding themselves on profounder conceptions in the midst of a remarkable simplicity of life. Meanwhile, at about the same period the other great race also began to move in immense migrations. In the person of Eber it entered Mesopotamia; in the person of Joktan it entered Arabia; in the person of Abraham it entered Palestine. Indifferent, except in those branches of it which were half Hamitic, to the great arts of war and peace, to this race was it mainly given to keep alive the revelation of the Unity of God and the eternal majesty of the moral law. After a long history, somewhat monotonous, and but rarely triumphant, there arose in the bosom of this race a new and diviner revelation which it rejected, but in the very act of rejecting imparted to the western descendants of its sister-race, and then sank gradually, but with one reviving and reactionary effort, into contented subordination. In the hands of this western race the Holy Fire began to burn brighter and yet more bright, and in their great commercial and military progress they reached their long-forgotten and then

unrecognised brothers of the east. In the hands of these eastern brothers they saw, as it were, the *crepundia*—the family tokens—which had remained almost intact in their possession, and which once had lain in the common cradle. But before those *crepundia* were recognised there was many a fierce struggle, many a blood-stained battle-field between these brothers, who saw in each other only aliens. After a separation of 4,000 years, after having traversed an immense circle of the globe, the younger Aryan returns, not solely to *rule* over the elder, not only to rekindle his torch at the sacred flame which had once glowed on the ancestral hearth, but to teach him,—in requital it may be for many injuries,—the lessons of a superior wisdom, a purer justice, and a loftier morality,—above all, to teach him that body of sacred truth which was long the special glory and amulet of the Hebraic Semite, but which when once it had been imparted to the Indo-European family, was fostered by Grecian genius, and supported by Roman power, and deepened by Germanic thought, and illustrated by Italian art, and disseminated by the energy and empire of England, and should now be inscribed upon the common labarum, which a race,—formed indeed of separate nationalities, but animated by a sublime unanimity of purpose,—should regard it as their highest object, and their providential mission, to render visible and glorious through a redeemed and regenerated world.

# TABLE OF THE SEMITIC OR SYRO-ARABIAN LANGUAGES.




[The names in red letters denote dead languages.]

Spottiswoode & Co., Lith.

# LECTURE IV.

IN the previous Lectures, after briefly describing the steps which led to the great discovery of Comparative Philology, I have endeavoured to set before you a few of its most remarkable results, and to call your attention to the progress of the religious ideas of the Semite, and the arms and civilisation of the Aryan, across the world. In doing this I wished to sum up the chief historical conclusions to which the Science of Language has hitherto attained; but it is probable that discoveries no less startling, and inferences even more important, may await her in the vast field to which I now invite your attention, a field so vast that it might well occupy a series of many Lectures, and to which it is utterly impossible to do justice in the hour which alone remains to me of my present course.

You will see it stated in many modern treatises that the languages of the world may be divided into *three* great Families—the Semitic, the Aryan, and the Turanian. Now, unless the word Family be used in two entirely different senses, I must at the very outset protest against any such classification as

illusory and unscientific. The Aryan is a family; the Semitic is a family; the so-called Turanian, unless it be confined within very narrow limits, is in *no* sense of the word a family, but a vast seething mass of human languages hitherto most imperfectly known, and most superficially compared together. These languages are spoken by tribes and nations which have no ethnographical affinities, and many of them differ from each other as completely and fundamentally as it is possible for languages to do.* To speak of them as forming a *family* is to force a number of gratuitous hypotheses into the shadowy semblance of a scientific generalization. And the very name Turanian is altogether unfortunate, for at the best it has a mere geographical significance, and can only be correctly applied to the natives of Turkestan. It is simply unwarrantable, as Professor Pott demonstrated fourteen years ago,† to open it 'like a great convenient bag' and fling promiscuously into it languages so radically diverse as Basque, Malay,

* I have already touched on this subject in a paper read before the Ethnological Society (*Mag.* 1865), and printed in their *Transactions*. No doubt the dissemination and (as I hold) misapplication of the name Turanian is due in a great measure to Bunsen, whose glowing human sympathies were delighted by what seemed to him a splendid and well-established generalisation. Professor Max Müller, although he holds what may be called the Turanian theory, has always written of it, and especially in all his later works, with conspicuous caution and moderation; he has even checked the unscientific zeal of philologians who were too hasty in adducing arguments in its favour. See *Stratification of Language*, pp. 42, 43.

† In the *Deutsch. morgenl. Zeitsch.* ix. 417.

Polynesian, American, African, Australasian, with Chinese underlying them all as an 'inorganic' Turanian structure. In fact, so much has this unfortunate word been abused, so completely have English and American writers made it a sort of hypothetical sandrope to tie together languages absolutely alien to each other, that the original inventor of the word, the venerable Omalius d'Halloy, in the last edition of his *Élémens d'Ethnographie*, deliberately abandoned it for the name *Alatyan*, a name applied to themselves by the Tatars of Siberia. He says that the name *Tatar* should be banished from Ethnology, because under it are confused together people of two great races, the white and the yellow; consequently in 1840 he adopted instead the name *Turanian*; but in 1859, regretting the wholly undue extension which had been given to the term, and finding from M. Levchine's travels among the Khirgiz-Kazaks, that the Tatars of Siberia call themselves Alatys, he deliberately adopted this name and excluded the other.*

Great as is the discovery that languages mutually unintelligible may yet be rigorously proved to be connected, by the close similarity of their grammatical structure and the rigid identity of their roots, it is a discovery which will lose half its value if it be hastily and impetuously applied to languages wholly distinct from each other. It is far too early in the day to talk of the 'Turanian Unity,' unless we limit the

* Omalius d'Halloy, *Élém. d'Ethnographie*, p. 52.

expression to the linguistic family which in the accompanying table is called Alatyan. The preconceived opinion as to the feasibility of giving to the term an immense extension has hitherto been only supported, and that very inadequately, by a few dubious and possibly accidental resemblances of roots, and by that vague similarity of linguistic appliances which must result from the fact that men everywhere have similar organs of expression, and some analogy in their mental processes. And be it observed, that in classifying the Aryan and Semitic families we have, strictly speaking, merely classified languages spoken on what may be called four peninsulas* — viz., Europe, Asia Minor, Arabia, and Hindostan; but how vast is the number of living languages, from the Liakhov Islands to Otaheite, and from Alaska to Papua—how vast the number of dead languages from those displaced by Roman conquests to those of North America, of which in Humboldt's time a few aged parrots were the sole surviving speakers,† — which yet remain, and probably for ever will remain, unexamined and unclassed. And how unphilosophical and rash prematurely to throw together, as even hypothetically of a common origin, such languages

* See Max Müller in Bunsen, *Outlines of the Philosophy of History*, ii. 6–9.

† 'M. A. de Humboldt rencontra à Mapuyrès un vieux perroquet dont personne ne pouvait comprendre le langage.'—A. Maury, *Revue des deux Mondes*, 15 avr. 1857.

as the severely-monosyllabic Chinese with languages which, like Tlatskanai, have words of a dozen or twenty syllables long for the simplest material objects; —or such languages as that of the Puri-Indians, which have no words for yesterday or to-morrow, and cannot get beyond the number three, with languages like Japanese, which, we are told, possesses separate and specific numerals to express the numbers of ships, of birds, of men, of animals, of long objects, of flat objects, of hats, of umbrellas, of parasols, of inanimate objects with four legs, of sealed letters, of patent letters, and so on up to 100,000! * It is surely time that the wholly fictitious Tur, a venerable personage† (as M. Broca says), 'forgotten by Moses and unknown to Noah,' should take his place side by side with Brute the Trojan, or Francus, grandson of Hector, or Prester John; and that the Turanians should confine themselves henceforth permanently to the wilds of their native Turkestan. If any words be wanted to describe the (perhaps a thousand) languages which are not Aryan, and not Semitic, and which have not yet been grouped together by mutual affinities, there are two excellent, easy, and perfectly unobjectionable terms at hand, and we may honestly confess our total ignorance as to any real principle of unity pervading them, by calling them Sporadic,

* Crawford 'On Numerals,' *Ethnol. Trans.* 1863.

† 'La Linguist. et l'Anthropol.,' *Bull. de la Soc. d'Anthropol.* 1862, p. 272, seq.

i.e. scattered; or Allophylian, i.e. spoken by other different tribes of the human family.

Now, there have been, but I do not suppose there still are, some Aryan scholars, Sanskritists and classical philologians—who would treat these barbarous and semi-civilised languages with nearly as lordly a contempt as was shown by the Greeks for every language but their own. And partly in consequence of this it has constantly happened that Englishmen have been located in the midst of languages of the deepest interest, and which are rapidly becoming extinct, and have not taken the slightest trouble to preserve even a faint trace of their vocabulary or grammar. Fortunately, however, there have been others who have felt more of the spirit of the Roman dramatist, *Hómo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto,* and who have rightly concluded that the very meanest human dialects spoken by the most squalid human tribes that ever existed on mussels, or on dead whales, or on the pupæ of the wood-ant, or on each other,—the languages muttered by the Innuit in his miserable igloo of snow, or the Bosjesman in the lair which he scrapes out of the sands of the parched karoo—are yet subjects of deep interest, and *may* even lead to more remarkable discoveries than the most polished language which ever enshrined an immortal literature. For it is these languages more than any others which are likely to throw a faint glimmer of light

over what may be called 'that *Eocene* period of the human mind which precedes the dawn of all history'—for which, therefore, indispensable as it is for our ethnic and zoological, nay, even for our political and humanitarian speculations, all other lights are wanting. In fact the more bizarre the method of the language, the more impoverished are its resources, the more miserable the contrivances it adopts, the more nakedly it displays the crude infantile expedients of a primitive speech, the more forcible the contrast it presents to all the languages with which we are familiar, *the more entirely is it worthy of our philological examination.* For after all it is, and must necessarily be, an instrument, and an adequate instrument, for the expression of human needs, even if those needs are at their lowest; and a dim reflex of human intelligence, even if that intelligence be of the meanest and least developed type. In Language as in Nature there is an infinite power of adaptation and an infinite capacity for development. Take the loveliest and richest language which ever was, and it will be possible to analyse it into roots of the crudest character, and metaphors the most erroneous or vague. Just as the Roman satirist taunted his countrymen with the fact that, however far back they might trace their genealogy, their ultimate ancestor was either a shepherd or a thief, so we may say of the lordliest language—we may say even of sacred Hebrew or of exquisite Greek—that its constituent

elements are nothing better than onomatopœias and infant cries. Even numerals, abstract as they may seem, are derived from imitations and metaphor. Myriad is from the root *mur*, in *murmur*, implying the rush of water-drops. The Sanskrit for 100 crores of lacs of rupees is *jaladhi*, or ocean, and for ten billions is *padma*, a lotus, or *sanku*, an ant-hill. Take such a word as 'mystery,' beyond which in its highest meanings language cannot go, yet what is it etymologically but an extension of the syllables *mu*, *mum*, an onomatopœia from the closing of the lips? What is 'mother' but a lengthening of the first crooning of childish labials? What is 'heaven' but the space heaved over us, or 'hell' but a hole beneath our feet? Languages very crude and sensuous in their character have but remained at a stage in which *all* language must once have been. All that the Hebrew uttered by the majestic and sonorous economy of his strange triliteral roots,—all that the Greek eternised in the rich, musical, synthetic forms of his delicately-modulated expression,—all that the Italian conveys in the 'vowelled undersong' of his liquid utterance, the Hottentot is no less able, under *some* form or other, to interpret into his dissonant clicks, and the aborigines of Malacca by their bird-like whistlings, and the Chinese by his monosyllabic interjections, and the Eskimo or the Cherokee by his guttural and immeasurable polysyllables. I hardly hesitate to prophesy the extreme probability that the

final answer to many high scientific problems respecting the nature and origin of man may come from enquiries into the languages of nations such as these, rather than from any other branch of physiological or palæontological research. In examining the idea and structure of a plant a botanist is far more likely to understand it by choosing its wild and original representative, than by culling a specimen from the garden or the conservatory. Now cultivated* and literary languages are like hothouse plants, modified and distorted by hundreds of years of care and cultivation; and savage languages are like their most starved, isolated, and neglected congeners, which, however inferior, are yet most likely to give us a comprehension of the unaltered and normal organism.

Fortunately, then, as I have said, there have been scholars, who with nothing to tempt them but the love of truth, have turned aside from the Hesperian gardens of Aryan philology into the apparently barren fields of Allophylian research. Klaproth and Schott and Von der Gabelentz are all honourably known for their Allophylian labours. The great work of Boethlingk on the Jakutish language may almost rank with Bopp's Comparative Grammar. The recent vocabulary of the non-Aryan dialects of India has brought deserved credit to the distinguished author of the *Rural Annals of Bengal*, and will most certainly redound to the interest, the

* Schleicher, *Die deutsch. Spr.* 9.

usefulness, and stability of our Indian dominions. But in this field the highest honour belongs to Rask and Castrén. Rasmus Christian Rask, a young Dane, in his zeal to understand something of this branch of philology, made himself master of no less than twenty-five languages and dialects, endured alike 'the biting frost of Iceland and the scorching suns of India,' travelled overland from Russia to Persia, and lived with equal contentment among the ruins of Persepolis and in the tents of the swarthy Finns. Alexander Castrén, who deserved if any man has ever deserved the splendid tribute of such a record as Browning's 'Grammarian's Funeral,' began, as Professor Müller observes, a new era in these studies, when, 'though in delicate health, he left his study, travelled for years alone in his sledge through the snowy deserts of Siberia, coasted along the borders of the Polar Sea, lived for whole winters in caves of ice or in the smoky huts of greasy Samoieds, then braved the sand-clouds of Mongolia, passed the Baikal, and returned from the frontiers of China to his duties as Professor at Helsingfors, to die after he had given to the world but a few specimens of his treasures.' The united labours of such men were not infructuous, and the results of them were to demonstrate that there were well-marked affinities between the five languages of Northern Asia and Europe which you see mentioned in the table before you, on which I have substituted the name Alatyan

for the objectionable though common Turanian. Nor is this the only liberty I have taken, for I have not thought it worth while for our present purpose to load the table with a number of obscure and unknown names, and have therefore in the final division recorded those only which were most important and familiar. I wish also to add the very strong warning founded on the frank admission of those who are best acquainted with the facts, that the evidence on which the affinity of this band of northern languages is admitted, though it may be considered to rest on sufficient foundation, is yet of a wholly different and wholly inferior character to that which has established the unity and mutual affinities of different families of the Aryan or Semitic race.

All that has really been done at present in the classification of these Sporadic languages is the establishment of certain large groups into which they may be separated. One of these is the Alatyan, of which I have just spoken. Another is the Malayo-Polynesian; another is the Polysynthetic, a word describing the class of languages spoken, with scarcely an exception, over a space of 120 degrees of latitude, from Greenland to Cape Horn. Another is the Monosyllabic, or Chinese; another, the Trans-gangetic. Another, the Bantu, or languages of Southern Africa, in which Dr. Bleek has been the chief worker; and another, which has been called

the Tamulic, among the numerous aboriginal tribes of India. But all these are isolated and unconnected groups, having between each other no demonstrable affinity except a certain supposed general structure, to which has been given the conveniently elastic name of Agglutination. To this I shall return further on; but I must first pause to ask who the people *are* who speak these groups of languages, which rise like isolated mountain-peaks out of broad primeval seas of impenetrable mist.

Excluding for the present the Chinese, Egyptians, Peruvians, Mexicans, and in modern times such nations as the Finns, Magyars, and Turks, we may say generally that a large number of them belong to the lowest, palæozoic strata of humanity. They were the peoples whom the Aryan and the Semite overcame in internecine warfare, and oppressed with inextinguishable hate; peoples whom no nation acknowledges as its kinsmen; whose languages, rich in words for all that can be eaten or handled, seem absolutely incapable of expressing the reflex conceptions of the intellect, or the higher orms of the consciousness; whose life seems confined to a gratification of animal wants, with no hope in the future and no pride in the past. They are for the most part peoples without a literature and without a history, and many of them apparently as imperfectible as the Ainos of Jesso or the Veddahs of Ceylon; peoples whose tongues in some

instances have twenty names for murder, but no name for love, no name for gratitude, no name for God.* Every civilised nation has found them, and even savage nations have traditions or relics of yet more savage predecessors. The Kelts, the New Zealanders, the North American Indians, all knew, or believed, that they had ousted a race of previous inhabitants; and even among the immemorial Chinese there yet linger, in Formosa, and Hainan, and among the hills, the relics of an aboriginal population whom they call by the significant name of Miautszee, or *children of the soil.* And indeed these races once covered the soil like the primeval forests which served by their deciduous leaves to prepare the earth for a later and richer growth. The Egyptians

* It is well known that in one African language, when the translators of the Bible were seeking a word for God, the only thing like it they could find was a word *Tixo* meaning 'Crooked-knee,' which had been the nickname of a great medicine-man of a generation before. Another anecdote will perhaps give some impression of these languages. I was told by a distinguished prelate of the English Church that when a translation of the Bible was first attempted into a certain Kafir language, the missionaries being anxious to find a word for love (in the text 'God is love'), endeavoured to get at such a word from enquiry among the natives. They got a word and rendered the verse, but there is something almost tragically sad in the fact which was afterwards discovered, that this word which they had used simply meant *meat in an advanced stage of decomposition.* Being asked for something which would express that which they most liked and longed for, this was the nearest analogon to such a conception which the natives could find, and this was the word which they had innocently furnished, and which had in equal innocence been adopted!

spoke of the Νέκυες, or Dead-ones, who had preceded them; the Canaanites called them Rephaim, a name which the Hebrews adopted as their word for ghosts. In the thirtieth chapter of Job you will find an almost savage description of one such Troglodyte race, and their life described as a dark, solitary, squalid subsistence on roots and mallows in the desolate wilderness, 'whose fathers I would have disdained to set with the dogs of my flock, who cut up mallows by the bushes, and juniper-roots for their meat. They were driven forth from among men, among the bushes they brayed, under the nettles they were gathered together.' It reads like the description of a Yakkah or a Yamparico; but of course these aboriginal populations were not *all* so low as this. It is hard to believe that the Esthonians, and Finns, and Lapps, who once covered all Russia, were a particularly degraded race. That they were long occupiers is touchingly proved by the fact that they have left hundreds of names upon the map. In the vast Slavonic area there is scarcely a name which ends in *ga*, *va*, *ma*—all such names, from the Lena to the Dvina, as Moskva, Mordva, Onega, Ladoga, Narva,—which does not testify that the land once belonged to a swarthy, dwarfish, and now despised and dwindling race, whose language, nevertheless, is not only soft and musical, but is to a very great extent inflectional and not agglutinative.*

* It is remarkable that the Finnic, which is far the most developed

But the climax of hatred in describing these autochthonal peoples, with whom their early poems show that they had a long and terrible struggle, is found in the language of the Aryans of Hindostan. Among them the aborigines whom they dispossessed are called Locust-eaters, Hole-dwellers, Raw-eaters, Rejectors of Indra, Monkey-tribes, Snakes, black, noseless, faceless demons, of squat stature and inarticulate speech. In the Hindoo theatricals to this day Mr. Hunter informs us that they are introduced on the stage as the demon inhabitants of the lower regions, with human faces but serpent tails, and sometimes with broad hoods, which represent the expanded neck of the cobra di capello! *

But while at first the mind may almost seem to sink bewildered before the numberless multitudes of tribes like these—tribes which have contributed *nothing* to the progress or enlightenment of the human race—tribes which have succeeded others which seem if possible to have been even lower still, and which once covered such colossal spaces of the earth's surface in every stage of nomad unprogressiveness or squalid savagery—yet even here

of the Alatyan languages, is also the only one which has a literature of any importance. It possesses what so many of even the most advanced nations lack—a national epic, the *Kalewala*. Anyone desirous of reading this curious and not uninteresting poem may do so in the German version of Schiefner (St. Petersburg, 1852), or the French of Le Duc, 1845.

* Hunter's *Rural Bengal*, p. 112.

Philology has not resigned her task, and here also she has some of her highest lessons to teach, lessons which have been won in many a year of terrible hardship and perilous fatigue, by many an heroic missionary and intrepid pioneer. And so completely has the earth been traversed over its remotest regions, and pierced to its extremest solitudes, that it is probable that there is no mode of human speech of which, in some of its dialects, we do not now possess vocabularies and specimens. Now no absolute morphological * classification of the non-Aryo-Semitic languages is possible; no firm and definite lines of demarcation can be drawn between the outlying members and debateable lands of the separate linguistic kingdoms. Sometimes a language which is placed under the Agglutinative might be reasonably challenged as belonging to the Isolating or the Polysynthetic classes. The remark of our eminent botanist, Robert Brown, that nature connects organic bodies '*reticulatim potius quam catenatim*'—netwise rather than by separate links—is no less true of languages. Still, we may, I think, safely assert that there are very few of these Allophylian languages which do not fall under the broad divisions of (i.) Isolating, i.e. monosyllabic and unsyntactical, (ii.) Agglutinating, or (iii.) Polysynthetic, terms which I shall explain and illustrate a

* By the morphology of a language we mean the general laws of its grammatical structure.

little further on.* Very few of them, so far as we know, can be called inflectional, like the Aryan; nor do any of them systematically adopt the method of internal vowel-modification, like the Semitic, to express the various shades of meaning. In the short space which yet remains to me, I will try to give some rough and general conception of the structure that prevails among them. But I must repeat my warning, that the very rude and imperfect table before you is in no sense to be compared with those of the Aryan and Semitic languages; it is even in this broadest and roughest outline very uncertain; notes

* I may, however, give an illustration at once. Thus, suppose you want to express causality. First, in an isolating language, the idea would be either left wholly unexpressed, as in Chinese, where e.g. *ta* means either 'to be great' or 'to make great,' or it would be expressed by mere repetition, as in Namaqua, where *lan*='to know,' and *lan lan*='to make know.' Secondly, in an agglutinating language, it would be expressed by loosely adding (after the fashion of a printer's-hyphen compound) some separate verb, as in Magyar, where *ir* means 'he writes,' and *ir-at*, 'he makes to write.' Thirdly, in an inflectional language the causation may be expressed by a mere symbol, whose original elements are too obliterated for separate usage, as in the *θη*, which is a sign in Greek of the first aorist passive, and which is derived from the roots of *τίθημι* and *ἵημι*, 'a making to go;' and this symbol may be so wholly absorbed into the word, and mixed up with its root, that as in the English 'sit,' 'seat,' no trace may be left of its original existence but the alteration of a vowel. It is difficult to give any absolutely accurate definition of flexion, although it is not difficult to pronounce whether a language does or does not belong to the inflectional class; but the essential peculiarity of a flexional language is this, that for the purposes of declension and conjugation it makes use of formative elements so purely conventional and mechanical, that the nature of its construction is not even suspected by nine-tenths of those who use it.

of interrogation might reasonably be interspersed among many of the names; it represents a comparatively imperfect knowledge even among the scholars who have studied it most; it does not pretend to indicate any *affiliation* between these languages, or any genetic connection, even the remotest, between the different groups. A few minutes' examination of it will show you that owing to our uncertainty many remarkable languages (Japanese, for instance, and Australian) are 'conspicuous for their absence,' and that in two memorable instances—Africa and America—the countless mutually-unintelligible tongues of immense continents are only represented by a single word.

1. As a specimen of what a monosyllabic language is like, I will of course take Chinese, a language so full of remarkable and deeply-interesting peculiarities that it might well fill a lecture by itself. Two words will admirably characterise both the Chinese language and the Chinese civilisation—I mean the words 'arrested development.' Up to a certain point the Chinese are astonishing; at that point they become ridiculous. They invented writing, but it stopped at hieroglyphics and ideography; they elaborated a kind of art, but it had no perspective and no ideality; they have a religion, but it is destitute of enthusiasm; a literature, but it has no warmth; an administration, but it has no elasticity and no life. They were acquainted with gunpowder, but it

ended in fireworks; they discovered the compass, but used it only as a plaything; they invented printing, but never got to movable types. Nor is it different with their language. It looks like a language suddenly petrified at the very commencement of its career. It has thirty-six consonants, but among them no sounds so characteristic as *b*, *d*, *r*, and *z*. Nor can the Chinese pronounce two consonants with one emission of the breath, but are compelled, for instance, to say 'Wikitoria' for 'Victoria,' 'Fan-lan-mo' for 'Brahma,' 'Inkili' for 'English,' and 'Kilisutu' for 'Christ.' Unlike any other language of which we are aware, Chinese is an *inorganic* language. It has no grammar and no words. It has no grammar, for grammar consists in accidence, syntax, and analysis, and *accidence* is impossible where there is not the shadow of an inflection for case or tense; *syntax* is impossible where there are no such things as parts of speech; *analysis* is impossible where every word is a simple and unaltered monosyllable.* It is quite amusing to look

* Hence the so-called native Chinese grammars are mainly lexicographic; and grammar (which mainly concerns the written language) becomes a kind of rhetoric. In one of these books grammar is defined as an art which teaches us to distinguish the *chi-tseu*, or 'full words,' from the *hiu-tseu*, or 'empty words,' *i.e.* the words which mainly mark relationships. They further distinguished between the *ho-tseu*, or 'living words,' and the *sse-tseu*, or 'dead words,' the former expressing actions or conditions (verbs), and the latter naming or qualifying objects (nouns and adjectives).—Bazin, *Gram. mand.* xxiv. Some of our proverbs and telegrams will give a notion

at a treatise like Mr. Wade's '*Tzu Erh Chi*, or Progressive Exercises in Chinese,' and to observe the shifts to which he is put, the cumbrous and curious periphrases with which he is obliged to be content, to furnish even a remote analogue for such common expressions as 'case' and 'tense.' The difficulties of this kind are insuperable, and a Chinese grammar cannot, by any conceivable process, be fused into the moulds of our Aryan logic. Now it may sound sensational to add that Chinese has no words; but, strange as it may appear, it is strictly and literally true. What are called its words are in fact *roots*; in one aspect they are roots *only*; in another they are *sentences*, in another they are mere *relative sounds*, which mean anything or nothing, except in particular connections, and with particular intonations; but, as Steinthal has pointed out, they are always either *more* or *less* than actual words. They are in fact like the fragments of a mosaic—ugly and meaningless, unless seen in their proper position. As far as they are *written* they may constitute words, but as far as they are *spoken* they are mere syllables which connote nothing at all. I cannot illustrate this assertion more simply than by the fact that Chinese has only some 450 sounds, and yet has upwards of 40,000 ideographic signs to represent these sounds. Take,

of Chinese sentences. 'If there be no faith in our words, of what use are they?' becomes in Chinese, 'Words and no faith, words what use?'—Davis, *Chinese Maxims*, p. 18.

for instance, such a syllable as *ta*; not only is it any and every part of speech,* so that without the slightest change even in pronunciation it may happen to mean either *great, greatness, greatly,* to *become great,* or to *make great*; but also it has, as every Chinese syllable has, four or five wholly different intonations,† each intonation producing a different meaning, and each meaning being so vague that one sound seems to stand very often for twenty different things. It would be absurd therefore to call *ta* a word. If in English I say 'air,' I may mean the atmosphere, or the poetical adverb 'ere,' or the point of Ayr in the Isle of Man, or the contraction of 'ever,' or Governor Eyre, or the 'heir' of an estate; or, if I happen to be in the habit of dropping my h's, I may mean what Punch's hairdresser calls 'the 'air of the 'ed;' and so far the mere sound 'air' by itself can hardly be called a word. But in English these homonyms are the rare exception; in Chinese they are the universal rule, and hence we find such oddities of language as *ba bà bâ bá*, which is said to mean in Annam 'three ladies gave the favourite of the prince a box on the ear;' or, to borrow an instance from M. Abel de Rémusat, *Fu tschi tschi*

* This is a characteristic of languages in an early stage, and hence too of languages which are going through a re-formative process, *e.g.* English in the reign of Elizabeth, 'in which almost any part of speech can be used as any other part of speech.'—Abbott, *Shaksp. Gram.* i.

† This again is a characteristic of primitive and savage tongues. Annamese, for instance, with its six intonations, has been compared to 'a perpetual chant.'

*tschi tschi lu*, 'he did not know the way to go by,' literally, 'not know to pass-over it of it.'* The result of all this chaos, however, is less chaotic than might be supposed; it is reduced to order and meaning, partly by tone of voice, and contrast, and partly by what may be called *tautologism*, *i.e.* by using a *second* synonym to define the word which is vague; in point of fact, by making two vague words into one definite word.† Thus in the Karen dialect, for instance, *la* means both *moon* and *leaf*; but, to avoid confusion, when it means 'moon,' *mo*, the word for *sun*, is added to it, and when it means 'leaf' *thé* is added; so that *la-mo* means 'moon,' and *la-thé* means 'leaf.' Again, supposing that a Chinese wants to express the word 'actions,' not having any distinction between noun and verb, he might say *hing*, which means *to do*; but besides this meaning, *hing* also means 'to walk,' 'to punish,' 'fortunate,' &c.; again, he might use the word *wei*, which means *to do*, but *wei* also means 'to become,' 'dignity,' &c. But when they are united into one word, *hing-wei*, then we must take the meaning common to both, and 'make-do' ='action;' while as for the plural, we either leave

* Ab. de Rémusat, *Élém. de la gram. chin.* p. 78; cf. Bazin, *Gram. maud.* xiv.: 'Le caractère 之 est pris dans le premier cas comme verbe, dans le second comme pronom de la troisième personne à l'accusatif, et dans le troisième comme marque des rapports entre l'action de ce verbe et le substantif qui suit.'

† E.g. in the *written* language *kin* means cap, axe, gold, now, &c., but in the *spoken*, *mao-tseu* is cap, *fou-tseu* is axe, *kuang-kin*, gold, *jou-kin*, now, &c.—Bazin, *Gram. maud.* v.

it unexpressed, or prefix to the expression some word meaning a crowd. Yet, in spite of the expedients of intonation, tautologism, context, and gesture, a Chinese in speaking often fails to make his meaning plain. He can then, however, have recourse to the infallible expedient of *writing* what he means. The 40,000 ideographic signs of Chinese, partly representative, partly syllabic, are so managed as to render everything wonderfully clear, and to give a pictorial representation of the pedigree of nearly every word. In point of fact the history of the Chinese language is only explicable in connection with its written system. The reason why these monosyllables have kept their meaning is because of the ideographic signs attached to them. 'The pencil of the scribe is incessantly divorcing the combinations of the speaker, and preserving for future ages the primitive monads of the language in their original and immemorial integrity.' They in fact account for the stationariness of the language, and perhaps preserve for us, 'like mummies in their cerements, vocables which may have issued from antediluvian lips.' For this reason, the study of Chinese promises most memorable results. It differs from other languages as much as if it were spoken by the inhabitants of another planet. In this language, which, like the attempts of young children, is eminently monosyllabic and interjectional, we see, if anywhere, a picture of human speech in its primitive

inadequacy. 'While all other tongues, in floating down the stream of time, have undergone perpetual commixture and change, this alone has resisted the mighty *débâcle*, bringing to us in its rigid and frozen masses the fresh but strange and bizarre elements of a primitive language and an infant civilisation.'*

As another specimen of an isolating language, let me take the dialect of the Khasias, tribes of the hill-range which separates Eastern Bengal from Assam. In some respects as a linguistic type it may be regarded as a step higher than the Chinese, inasmuch as its words are real words, and the meaning is evolved from their simple juxtaposition, without the need of context or intonation. In Khasia, very often a word is a sentence. Thus *bam* means *eat*, and to get the word 'food,' we have *ka jing bam* —*ka* being the feminine article, and *jing* meaning 'thing,' and marking a substantive; so that *the-thing-eat*=food. Hence a vast number of their words begin with *ka jing*, and in a Khasia dictionary *k* is by far the most voluminous letter. Another peculiarity in an isolating language is the necessity of putting half-a-dozen words for one thing, as though to get nearer and nearer at its essence by an agglomeration of its attributes. In Aryan languages *one* quality or attribute of a thing is sufficient to furnish its name—in Sanskrit, for instance, the name of a bear may be derived from its

* Laidly *On the Karen Dialects*, p. 10.

shining fur; of a lion from its hairy mane (*kesin*), of an elephant from its bright ivory (*ibha*) or its drinking twice (*dvipa*), or from its tusks (*dantin, dvirada*), or from its having a hand (*hastin, karenu*), or from its having a serpent for a nose—but in savage languages there is often an attempt to heap up *all* the attributes of a thing together, and so make of them a single word—as when in Mexican a goat was called *head-tree lip-hair*, i.e. the horned and bearded.

'Reflection' in Khasia is *jing kyrtot phalang kynduh jingurut*; and 'distinct' is graphically expressed by *ba ha la kajong ka jong*, and 'invalid' by *u ba la pyntlot da ka jing pang*; where *u* is the masculine article, *ba* is a relative here used as a sign of the participle, *la* is a *possessive* indicating the past, *pyn* represents causality, *ka jing* are 'the thing,' and *pang* is 'ill:' what *tlot* and *da* mean my vocabulary does not tell me; so that 'invalid' means, 'the which its cause? the thing ill.' Is it not obvious at a glance that a people whose language has not attained any farther development than this, but is still, like an asymptote, indefinitely distant from the circumference, must belong to a lower stratum than the Aryan who conquered him? Is it not clear that in such a language as this all literary culture, all refined expression, all elevated teaching, are impossible? Yet both the Hindoos and we have suffered terribly, and still are suffering most seriously, for our neglect and contempt of these

primitive populations. To this day it is a sign of the power of these aboriginal races, that, in order to secure their allegiance, some of the haughtiest Hindoo rajahs must on the day of their coronation completely waive the notion of caste, and actually submit to have their foreheads marked by one of these detested aliens with a round spot of warm aboriginal blood drawn from the toe of another.* We, after having suffered for years from raids and devastations of Booteahs, and Sonthals, and Khasias, and Goorkas, irritated by our own ignorance and neglect, are at last beginning to discover that these despised and neglected tribes are remarkable for truth and manliness, and are capable of making faithful soldiers, peaceful subjects, and brave allies. We shall be verily guilty concerning our unfortunate brother, if any longer we see the anguish of his soul when he beseeches us and we will not hear.

2. The next class of languages to which I wish to call your attention may be specialised as the *agglutinating*. The peculiarity described by the term agglutination is one of the widest and vaguest character. Some agglutinating languages almost sink into the isolating class; others almost rise to the inflectional.† Agglutination may be described as

* See Hunter's *Annals of Rural Bengal*, 'Dissertation on the Non-Aryan Dialects of India,' p. 2.

† The characteristics that make it necessary to place such a language as the Suomi or Finnish under the agglutinating rather than under the inflectional class, are not very distinctly explicable,

that principle of linguistic structure which consists in the mere placing of unaltered roots side by side; as when to express 'discipline' the Chinese say 'law-soldier,' or for 'treasury,' 'room-silver,' or for 'elders,' 'father-mother,' or for 'enjoyment,' 'luxury-play-food-clothes.' This very simple method of getting new meanings by the mere juxtaposition of words, the main word being put first and the other words following, reigns throughout immense kingdoms of speech. Such words as the Turkish of *sev-isch-der-il-me-mek*, 'they could not be brought to love one another;' where *sev* means *love* and each of the following syllables has its separate and separable meaning: and as the Hungarian *var-at-andot-ta-tok*, 'you will have been waited for;' where *var* means 'wait,' *andot*, 'will,' *ta*, 'have,' *tok*, 'you,' and *at* is a conjunction,—will

and yet are very real. Finnish has many cases—more even than the Sanskrit—viz. (as named by Rask), the infinitive, genitive, inessive, elative, illative, adessive, ablative, allative, abessive, prolative, translative, essive, comitative, and instructive. Yet among them all it has no very distinct nominative or accusative. The infinitive case is simply our nominative with the indefinite article. Then again, every really inflectional language possesses, besides its inflections, certain words (such as prepositions) which express mere relations, and which are used as in Greek to give greater definiteness to the inflections themselves. The most genuine prepositions are not those which may be derived from verbs or nouns, but those which have a pronominal origin, and such prepositions are entirely wanting in Finnish. Again, the structure of sentences in Finnish is clumsy and deficient in style. I take some of these facts from a letter written to me by R. Cull, Esq., F.S.A., one of the very few English scholars who has any acquaintance with the Suomi. See too Steinthal, *Charakt. der haupts. Typen des Sprachbaues*, p. 329.

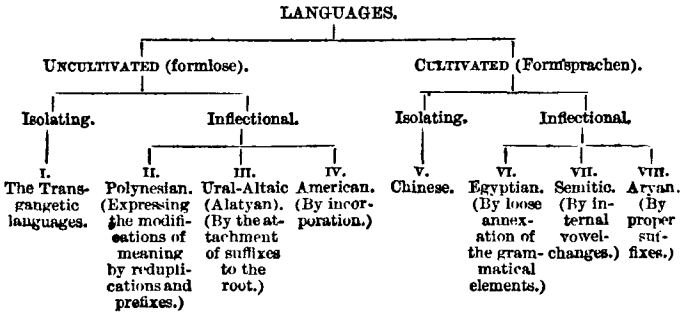
illustrate this structure. These are *parathetic* compounds, i.e. there is only a juxtaposition not a fusion, only a mechanical not a chemical union between their parts; and it will be seen at a glance how different they are from such synthetic forms as λελύσοιντο, which in Greek means 'would that they might have been loosed;' or ἐτετιμήμεθα, 'we had been honoured,' where, although the words can be analysed into their constituent elements, yet not one of those elements has any meaning or any existence apart from the compound word itself.

In fact, we may say that the union in a synthetic compound is like the union of oxygen and hydrogen in water, where the separate individuality of the component parts is obliterated and undistinguishable; but a parathetic compound is like water and oil lying one on the other, unmingled, in the same vessel. Who, for instance, in the synthetic compound 'which' would ever recognise the two words who-like; but in such a parathetic compound as house-top or sister-in-law, there is a mere mechanical junction of independent and distinguishable words. Now this kind of agglutination, in some degree or other, is a characteristic of three-fourths of the languages of the globe. To say, therefore, that a language is agglutinative is to throw but little light on its specific structure.

A simple and symmetrical, but much more precise, classification of languages has been elaborately esta-

blished by Professor Steinthal in his *Charakteristik der hauptsächlichsten Typen des Sprachbaues.* He would divide them all into two great classes, viz., culture-languages and uncultivated languages, and each of these he would divide into two classes, viz., the isolating and the inflecting.* Taking the uncultivated first: under the isolating class he would place the Transgangetic; and under the inflecting he would place three divisions: 1. The Polynesian, which expresses all the minor modifications of the meaning, all distinctions of declension and conjugation, by reduplications and prefixes. 2. The Ural-Altaic (here called the Alatyan), which expresses them by annexing separate words after the root in the manner we have seen; and 3. the American, which expresses them by amalgamation, in a way which we shall explain immediately. The cultivated languages are similarly divided—1. Into the isolating, here represented by Chinese; 2. into the inflectional,

* The table may be expressed as follows:—


LANGUAGES.
UNCULTIVATED (formlose).
CULTIVATED (Formsprachen).
Isolating.
Inflectional.
Isolating.
Inflectional.
I. The Transgangetic languages.
II. Polynesian. (Expressing the modifications of meaning by reduplications and prefixes.)
III. Ural-Altaic (Alatyan). (By the attachment of suffixes to the root.)
IV. American. (By incorporation.)
V. Chinese.
VI. Egyptian. (By loose annexation of the grammatical elements.)
VII. Semitic. (By internal vowel-changes.)
VIII. Aryan. (By proper suffixes.)

under which head he places—i. The Egyptian, which achieves a sort of inflection by a loose addition of grammatical elements. ii. The Semitic, by internal modification of the root; and iii. The Aryan, throughout which the formal elements have been reduced to mere conventional suffixes, such, for instance, as the letter *s*, which is our all-but-universal sign for the plural number.

This classification of Professor Steinthal's has considerable advantages over the ordinary genetic and morphological classifications, because it takes into account the psychological distinctions between languages no less than their grammatical structure. Chinese, for instance, by its unorganic and unsyntactic character, is generally placed at the very bottom of the linguistic scale, and is classed with such languages as that of Burmah. Finnish and Hungarian, on the other hand, are so rich in declensions and conjugations that some philologians (*e.g.* Schwartze and Europaeus) have been inclined to remove them from the agglutinating division and from the Ural-Altaic family, and class them with the Aryan languages.* This was clearly an error, although it is more than doubtful whether the conjugation of

* See an interesting little tract, *Ueber den Urstamm der indoeur. Sprachfam. und seine vor-indoeuropäischen Abzweigungen, namentlich die finnisch-ungarische*, by D. E. D. Europaeus, Helsingfors, 1863. He argues very earnestly in favour of the primitive Aryan affinities of Finnish, and mentions some facts about the Finns which certainly place them very high among Alatyan races.

these languages has not been enriched and modified by Aryan influences, and whether they do not furnish a proof that there may be a certain duality in the grammatical conceptions of any nation, i.e. a mixture of conflicting elements. However this may be, it is certain that in point of literary importance and cultivation, Chinese has far more right to stand on a line with Sanskrit than Hungarian, or even than Finnish, and far more right than Egyptian has to stand on a line with Hebrew. The 'Shy-king' is quite as important as the 'Kalewala,' and the works of Confucius and Meng-tseu are worth any number of obelisks and pyramids. And, accordingly, in the accompanying table Chinese stands in a more elevated position; it was in some respects a clumsier language than those which stand below it, but it has been far more carefully handled, and has produced far superior results.

In all the languages of the uncultivated or formless class there is no complete and adequate distinction between the material and formal elements, i.e. between roots and inflections, between the words which express objects and those which express relations. Chinese is free from this confusion, as it possesses material elements only, and either leaves all formal relations unexpressed or indicates them by means of position and other rhetorical considerations. Hebrew, with its vowel-less roots, which require vocalisation before they can attain any meaning

whatever, stands morphologically at the very opposite linguistic pole.* The Aryan and Semitic languages alone have elaborated a philosophical grammar by a system of inflections at once absolutely conventional and perfectly accurate. But the Semitic are far less flexible, less finely articulated, than the Aryan, less capable of arranging the clauses of a sentence in their due connection and subordination. Hence, though admirably adapted for the interjectional style of impassioned poetry, they have never been able to attain the λέξις κατεστραμμένη, the continuous period and flowing rhythm of Aryan prose.

3. You will see in the table that a whole class of languages are put by themselves as polysynthetic. The word implies all those languages which not only, like the Aryan and other languages, combine into single words the minor modifications of each main verbal or nominal conception, but which make whole clauses, and even whole sentences, into single words, compressed together in such a violent condition of fusion and apocope, that often no single syllable in the sentence would be capable of separate use. A few instances will best illustrate what is meant.

* In Chinese a sound, though it requires tautologism or position in the sentence to give it meaning, is not further susceptible of any alteration whatever. It is at once a root, and a sound capable of meaning; but in Hebrew the roots as such are merely consonantal, and therefore even unpronounceable. They are like the moulded clay into which the vowels breathe the Promethean fire of a living signification.

Thus in Mexican *nicalchihua* means 'I build my house,' but the words are so imbricated together that neither *ni*, 'I,' nor *cal*, 'house,' nor *chihua*, 'make,' can be employed as separate words. Again, *achichillacachocan* means 'the place where people weep because the water is red,' but the *separate* words are all clipped and altered in this compound, being *alt*, 'water,' *chichiltic*, 'red,' *tlacatl*, 'man,' and *chorea*, 'weep.' In fact the sentences are formed by a sort of *incapsulation*, and may be compared to those boxes shut up one within another which afford so much amusement to children;—or to those cryptogamic plants which, though they form an indivisible whole, have no vital centres or apparent functions. Three names—all of them good and descriptive—have been proposed, to represent this process, viz.: *polysynthesis*, or the synthesis of many words into one—*holophrasis*, the reduction of whole sentences into words—and *incorporation*. It characterises, so far as we know, every language from Greenland to Cape Horn, with the single exception of one monosyllabic dialect, the Othomi. Three characteristics of these languages, all resulting from this peculiarity of structure may here be mentioned, viz.: their rapid evanescence, their alliterative structure, and the immeasurable length of their polysyllables. As an instance of their *rapid divergence* we may mention the facts that, after a very short separation, two families of a tribe will become mutually unin-

telligible, and that books prepared by missionaries with infinite labour in one generation, may become useless in the next. As an instance of their *alliterative* character, which is common to most savage and undeveloped languages, I will only mention that while it is curious and ingenious, and gives an intricately-woven harmony of vowels and consonants to the utterance, it is perfectly useless for linguistic purposes, and furnishes an immense stumblingblock in the way of acquiring these tongues. As specimens of these polysyllables I need only adduce such words as *shakoorooceshairet* for 'day' in Pawnee, and *khotsiakatatkhusin* for 'tooth' in Tlatskanai. The word for 'tongue' being too frightful for pronunciation I have relegated it to a note.* These are indeed vocables which, as De Quincey observes, would be enough 'to splinter the teeth of a crocodile;' but Mexican seems to beat them in the bizarrerie of its sounds. In Mexican, e.g. the common address to a priest is the one word *Notlazomahiuzteopixcatatzin*, which means, 'Venerable priest, whom I honour as a father.' A fagot is *tlatlatlalpistiteutli*, and if the fagot were of green wood it could hardly make a greater splutter even in the fire. In the same language a lover would have had to say 'I love you' in the form *ni-mits-tsikāwakā-tlasolta*, and instead of a kiss he would have had to ask for a *tetenna-*

* 'Tongue' in Tlatskanai, an Athabascan language, is *khotzotkhltzitzkhltsaha*. 'Star' in Chenook is *tkhlkhekhanama*.

*miquilitzli.* 'Dieu merci,' exclaims the French writer from whom I quote this fact, 'quand on a prononcé le mot on a bien mérité la chose.'*

I must not mention these amalgamating languages without calling your attention to the fact that one of the very few isolated languages of Europe exhibits, strange to say, the only cis-Atlantic instance of this very peculiar structure. It is the Eskuara or Basque, spoken in the valleys of the Pyrenees, on the borders of France and Spain, in an angle of the Bay of Biscay. The ethnological and linguistic affinities of this language, though repeatedly inquired into, have never yet been satisfactorily ascertained. Its existence there remains at present an insoluble problem; but what is certain about it is that its structure is polysynthetic like the languages of America. Like them, and them only, it habitually forms its compounds by the elimination of certain radicals in the simple words; so that, e.g. *ilhun*, twilight, is contracted from *hill*, dead, and *egun*, day; and *belhaun*, the knee, from *belhar*, front, and *oin*, leg. It was this fact that made Larramendi give to his treatise on Basque grammar the title of 'The Impossible Overcome.'† The most daring of all the hypotheses which have

* It should be observed that to a language with such long words polysynthetism becomes an inevitable necessity: no compounds in such a language would be *possible* if they were not permitted to clip the composing elements into manageable shape.

† *El imposible vencido*, 1723.

been suggested points to the conceivable existence of some great Atlantis—to the possibility of the 'Basque area being the remains of a vast system, of which Madeira and the Azores are fragments, belonging to the Miocene period.' Be this as it may, the fact is indisputable, and is eminently noteworthy, that, while the affinities of the Basque roots have never been conclusively elucidated, there has never been any doubt that this isolated language, preserving its identity in a western corner of Europe, between two mighty kingdoms, resembles in its grammatical structure the aboriginal languages of the vast opposite continent, and those alone.

Before leaving this great realm of Sporadic languages, I should like to make a few remarks about the most prominent peculiarities by which uncultivated languages in general, and especially those of savages, and those absolutely destitute of literature, are characterized. And, first of all, I would point out an error which, until very lately, was widely prevalent. It has been repeatedly argued that the languages of the American Indians, the Kafirs, Hottentots, and many such nations, are so elaborate, contain such a bewildering number of conjugations and declensions, are dominated by such delicate and ever-varying laws of harmonic sequence, that they can only be regarded as the decaying fragments of nobler formations. It is

maintained that if, as Charlevoix remarks, the Huron presents 'a beautiful union of energy and nobleness,'—if, as Du Porceau says, there is real genius in the infinite variety and yet perfect regularity which these American languages display,—if Appleyard be correct in calling the South African languages 'highly systematic and truly philosophical,'—then forms of speech like theirs could not have been developed by tribes which were always illiterate and savage. I must confess to being entirely sceptical, both as to the premisses and the conclusion. People are apt to show an exaggerated partiality for any language, and particularly for any very difficult language, which with intense infinite toil they have been able to master; and when they lay bare before us the outline of what they so greatly admire, we generally find that some allowance must be made for the rapture of discovery. Now these expressions of enthusiasm for savage languages generally reduce themselves to a eulogy on three characteristics—viz., their *elaborateness*, their *exuberance*, and their semi-rhythmic *euphony*, and I think that a very little examination will show these peculiarities to be defects rather than merits. Their *elaborateness*, for instance, is found to be mainly due to a childish excess of definiteness which delights in incessant repetitions of one leading syllable, or in repeated reference to one noun. For instance, a Cree

Indian, if he wants to say, 'I see his son,' says instead an imposingly long and apparently elaborate word, which however simply means literally, 'He-his-son-I-see-him-his,'* where the accusative is three times and the possessive is twice repeated in the briefest compass; and similarly in Mexican, 'I give my son the bread' is 'I-it-him-give the bread my son.' The savage, like some civilized people, thinks he is all the finer if he has an inordinately long name, but we must not imitate him by thinking languages are a bit the better for being composed of long words. For instance, in these vaunted Kafir languages the repetition of syllables—one leading syllable thrusting itself with the most obtrusive tautology through a whole sentence—is even more childish than this persistence on the main idea. I find from a grammar by Dr. Bleek that, if a Zulu wants to say, 'Our fine nation appears, we love it,' he repeats *si*, which is the leading syllable in *I-si-zwe*, '*nation*,' no less than five times, exactly as if we should express it by saying, 'our-*na*-*nation* *na*-fine *na*-appears, we-*na*-love the *na*'; or, to take the instance he himself gives, to say in Zulu, 'our large steamer is in sight, we love it,' one would have to say, 'the steam*er*, our *er*, which *er* is a great *er*, the *er* appears, we love the *er*.' Surely after such

* See Whitney, *Lectures*, p. 349; Schleicher, *Die Deutsche Sprache*, p. 18. Steinthal gives similar specimens in Jakutisch, a Tatar language (*Charakteristik*, p. 193).

specimens, however systematic these languages may be, the less we talk with Mr. Appleyard about their being 'truly philosophic,' the better. Nor is the case improved if we turn to their *exuberance*, or dwell, as again Mr. Appleyard does, on there being in Kafir a hundred different forms for the word 'its.' This vaunted wealth, on a little examination, turns out to be a mere concealment for poverty. It is due to that utter—and what appears to us to be that almost imbecile—deficiency of abstraction which is one of the most remarkable facts about savage tongues. A savage may have a dozen verbs for 'I am here,' 'I am well,' 'I am tall,' 'I am hungry,' &c., because he has no word for 'am,' so that the missionary Elliot was obliged to render, 'I Am that I Am,' by 'I do, I do;' and a dozen words for 'my head,' 'your head,' 'his head,' and almost any conceivable person's head, because he finds a difficulty in realizing the mere conception of any head apart from its owner. A Cherokee will have twenty verbs meaning 'I wash my face,' 'I wash my hands,' 'I wash your face,' 'I wash some one else's hands,' and so on; because he can't get at the abstract conception 'I wash'; and words for 'I fish with a stick,' 'I fish with a string,' 'I fish for minnows,' 'I fish for sturgeon,' &c., but no word for 'I fish.' Once more, the endless euphonic changes arise from exactly the same fondness for assonance apart from meaning, that makes a Hindoo

servant tell his mistress that he has 'put the *kettley-bittley*' on the fire, or 'sewn the button-bitten on the coat'; or that makes nursemaids instinctively believe that it is pleasing to children to be told that 'Georgie-porgie has had a nice walky-palky.' It would, in short, be easy to show, in the most convincing manner, that the condition of these languages, so far from being a proof of primordial civilisation, is on the contrary rather a pledge of permanent undevelopment. They are the work of minds which have nothing else to occupy their energies and therefore follow in one single direction an erroneous and partial line of development. Unless Polytheism be more intellectual than Monotheism, unless the 40,000 signs of Chinese ideography are preferable to the 26 letters of the Aryan alphabet, unless it be more sensible to calculate the time by algebra or measure the height of a table by trigonometry rather than look at a clock or use a foot-rule—then all this polysynthetism, alliteration, and exuberance is a sign rather of inferiority than of culture. But in point of fact, ease and not difficulty, brevity and not periphrasis, simplicity and not complexity, is the triumph of civilisation; and a cumbersome linguistic machinery is worse than useless when it is possible to achieve the same ends far more effectually by the very simplest means.

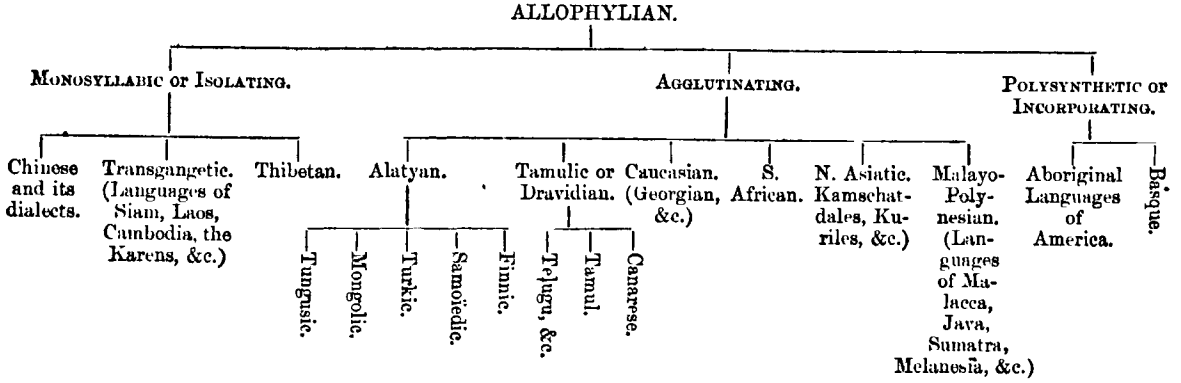
In speaking of various Allophylian races I have several times used the word 'inferiority,' and with-

out the aid of either philology or ethnology it might well appear a self-evident fact that some races of men *are* inferior to others. If for instance all the nations who speak these Allophylian and Sporadic languages were swept away to-morrow from the face of the earth—vast as would be the numerical lacuna which they would leave among the 1,000,000,000 of living men—they would, with the exception of the Chinese, leave scarcely a single trace behind them in the religion, the history, the literature, or the civilisation of mankind. It is true that there have been epochs when men of these races burst from their uncivilised confines, and under leaders like Attila and Timour and Zenghis Khan flooded the civilized world with their deluges of barbarism; but as a rule even their deeds of destruction have had but little permanence, and have left but a transitory impression. And even in historic periods not a few of these Sporadic peoples have utterly passed away. The Carib has disappeared from the West Indian islands; the Tasmanians from Van Diemen's land; the Guanches from the Canaries; the Maories are dying out from New Zealand; many tribes of the Americans, Australians, and other savages perish as surely before the advance of civilisation as does the line of snow, on which a shadow has lain, when the sunlight reaches it. There may be something melancholy in the thought, but, ultimately considered,

the disappearance of a race is merely the decease of an individual. And meanwhile it is a subject of hope and thanksgiving that each new phase of human existence has shown a nobler and nobler spectacle. Had the Chinese and the Egyptian never existed, the life of man would have been the life of the savage, without government, without inventions, without literature, without art, absorbed in procuring the means to satisfy his daily wants; had neither of the civilised races—the Aryan and the Semitic—appeared, mankind would have been petrified under a crude, hard, tyrannous, unprogressive civilisation, not rising above the placid sensuality of China, or the Negritian cruelty of Egypt. Had the Aryan alone appeared, 'the abysmal deeps of personality' would never have been sounded, nor the beauty of holiness been fully known. Had the Semite alone appeared, man might have been sunk in Oriental stagnation—noble indeed in his moral bearings, but too simply quiescent and introspective—without science, without inventiveness, without inquiry, without intellectual breadth and catholicity, without that physical energy and those 'wrestling thews' that throw the world. It is to the result of their *combined* work—to the science and strength of the Aryan, inspired and ennobled by the religious thoughts which were revealed to the Semite—that the immediate future of the world belongs. The natural energy of the

Aryan will be the instrument of his unceasing progress; the faith which he has adopted should be the guarantee of his justice and of his charity. Other races, whether they be equal or inferior, he will still regard as the other sheep of his Redeemer, though they be not of this fold—he will still look upon them as entrusted to his keeping, as children with him of a common God, and heirs with him of a common immortality. And then, if it be destined, as it *may* be destined, that he too, in his turn, should pass away to give place to a yet loftier and lovelier type of humanity, he will yet have done his work and will have earned his reward, and will be commemorated in the eternal annals of destiny as one who well fulfilled the highest purpose which can animate humanity—the physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual elevation of Humanity itself.

## TABLE OF THE CHIEF ALLOPHYLIAN LANGUAGES.



PHILOLOGICAL MAP
OF
EUROPE
ATLANTIC
OCEAN
Little Russia
Wallachia
Moldavia
Bulgaria
Servia
Albania
Greece
Turkey
Reference

PHILOLOGICAL MAP
OF
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3
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Arctic Ocean
Pacific Ocean
Indian Ocean
Bay of Bengal
China Sea
Sea of Japan
Sea of Okhotsk
Behring's Straits
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